MOTHER MARY CLOTILDA

And Early Companions

Sister M. Xaveria, A.B.

MARYGROVE COLLEGE
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Mother Mary Clotilda

and Early Companions

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MOTHER MARY CLOTILDA

Mother Mary Clotilda

and

Early Companions of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

by

SISTER M. XAVERIA, A.B.

with an Introduction by the
Right Reverend
Monsignor F. J. VAN ANTWERP, D.D., V.G.

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Bishop of Detroit

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To

THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

WHO SO FREQUENTLY INSPIRED AND DIRECTED

OUR SAINTLY MOTHER

AND TO WHOSE LOVE AND SERVICE SHE WAS SO

ENTIRELY DEVOTED

THIS TRIBUTE TO HER MEMORY IS LOVINGLY DEDICATED

A.M.D.G.

Dear Sister Xaveria:

Your letter kindly requesting me to write a little foreword for the Life of good Mother Clotilda of happy memory, which is about to be published at Monroe, is at hand. It affords me much pleasure, I assure you, to, in ever so small a way, add a tribute of love and esteem to a name ever held in benediction since my early boyhood days.

All the fifty years and more it was my privilege to know this valiant woman, she was always the saintly consecrated religious whose sole thought was the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Absolutely, unselfishly, she threw all the forces of her gifted mind and generous heart into the work so dear to her soul, the instruction of the little ones of her Divine Master unto justice; and may we not confidently hope that she is now enjoying the promised reward of shining as the stars of the firmament?

My first acquaintance with Mother Clotilda goes back to the classroom of the old Cathedral school on the site of what is now the collegiate chapel of the University of Detroit. There were but four classrooms, and it was my good fortune

to be in that presided over by her. My recollection of Mother Clotilda, of some sixty and more years ago, is a very pleasant one. She was at all times so gentle and kind in her dealings with her pupils, so untiring in her devotion to the work of the classroom, so assiduous in her endeavor to raise their hearts daily to God, the while they made progress in their studies, and so insistent upon the one thing necessary. With the experience of all these years that have come and gone since then, I am convinced her work was not an easy one. For those were the pioneer days of the Catholic school in Detroit. Hardships and privations and poverty were the daily lot of the devoted Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary when they first came to the Cathedral parish to take up their life work of training the budding minds of their charges. Despite the hardships they were obliged to endure, they cheerfully set to work to accomplish the task, inspirited by the splendid example of heroic virtue they witnessed in their local superior. I have a much cherished picture of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to Whom she was devoted with an all-absorbing love, on the bottom of which she wrote, "Perfect happiness is to be found only in the perfect love of God and the daily endeavor to fulfill His Holy Will." This thought was the inspiration of her whole life, and was the beacon light that led her on courageously

through many days that were trying and darksome following her initial work in that old Cathedral school.

The assimilation of this thought was very evident in the marked success that attended her efforts to build up the character and work of a growing Community of teaching Sisters. If the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary are an outstanding body of religious teachers today, it is, in no small measure, due to the tact, the foresight, and the gentle, persevering labor of the saintly Mother General who guided their destinies for so long a period of years. It would, indeed, be a great pity if the record of her fruitful and edifying life as a religious were not preserved for the encouragement of her Community, and the benefit of the many thousands who, through her efforts, have enjoyed the priceless boon of a Christian education. The story of those blessed days will be told by her biographer. The publication of her memoirs will prove, I'm sure, a satisfaction and a joy to all her friends and acquaintances, and will lead others to emulate the beauty of her life and virtues.

It is most refreshing, in these days of self-seeking, and the wild rush after pleasure and enjoyment and forgetfulness of eternity, to know that some favored souls are still to be found who climb out of the miasmatic atmosphere of a sor-

did, sensual world, to the lofty heights above, where the clear light of supernal brightness brings joy and peace and purity and happiness to all that are bold and courageous and generous enough to ascend the ladder of perfection.

FRANCIS J. VAN ANTWERP, V.G.

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The Life of Mother Mary Clotilda

1841—1914

The Life of Mother Mary Clotilda

1841–1914

CHAPTER I

BIRTH — EARLY LIFE — PARENTAGE

ON the twenty-first of October, 1841, among the hills and forests of North Lake, Livingston County, Michigan, was born the subject of this biography, Lucy Hoskyns, better known in religion as Mother Mary Clotilda of the Order of Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Lucy Hoskyns was the fourth in a family of five children, — Caroline, John, Chandos, Lucy, and Bennet. Her father, Edwin Bennet Hoskyns, an Englishman of noble ancestry, was a direct descendant of the first Sir Bennet Hoskyns who was elevated to the peerage in 1676 by King Charles II. He was born at Morehampton Castle, Dublin. Her mother, Miss Margaret O'Toole, of Irish Catholic parentage, was the beautiful daughter of Lawrence O'Toole, of Wicklow, Ireland.

In tracing her father's lineage back to the first peer who bore the name of Hoskyns, we are dazzled by the array of great names. Men of this family have distinguished themselves in almost every line of human endeavor. We find eminent scholars, statesmen, churchmen (Church of England, of course), and others too numerous to mention.

On her mother's side, also, there is no lack of scholarship. Her father, Lawrence O'Toole, was educated at Eton College (founded by Henry VI in 1440), one of the most famous of English public schools; but the most precious inheritance which came to Lucy Hoskyns from her mother was the gift of the True Faith.

The O'Tooles gave financial aid and moral support to the Reverend John Hand, a schoolteacher in Ireland, who was founder of All-Hallows College.

In 1823 Mr. Lawrence O'Toole joined the Catholic Association organized by Daniel O'Connell for the avowed purpose of winning Emancipation from England by legal and constitutional means. Margaret O'Toole, Mother Clotilda's mother, often spoke with pride of meeting the Great Emancipator and shaking hands with him on the occasion of his election to Parliament in 1828. It may be mentioned right here, that Miss Margaret O'Toole was remarkable for her beauty,

traces of which she retained even to an advanced age. She possessed a most pleasing and winning personality and the power of making warm friends wherever she went. However, the highest compliment that can be given her is to say that Mother Clotilda was her daughter.

Not long after his marriage, Mr. Hoskyns left Ireland, bringing his beautiful Wicklow bride to the wilds of Michigan, where he settled on a farm at North Lake. Mr. Edwin Bennet Hoskyns was by education and training better fitted to shine in legislative halls than to wrestle with the difficult problems of farming. But happily for this scion of the proud family of Hoskyns, he found himself among warm-hearted neighbors, of whom some, at least, were successful and wealthy farmers. They frequently lent a helping hand and a word of advice to this distinguished novice at farming.

The better to understand the privations of those pioneer days, we must recall the fact that Michigan at the time of which we are writing (1834) had not reached the dignity of state-hood; it was still a territory and sparsely settled. General Lewis Cass, only a few years before, had succeeded in extinguishing the Indian claims to Michigan Territory; but the red men, reluctant to leave the hunting-grounds of their fathers, still lingered on within its borders, until the

ever-advancing tide of civilization forced them permanently westward.

Then, too, recall for a moment the innumerable conveniences and luxuries which abound today, more especially means of travel, which were entirely unknown when Mr. Hoskyns found a home within the wilds of Michigan. But happy with the wife whom he all but adored, and the little children who came with the passing years to gladden his home, he was content in these privations.

Mr. Hoskyns never became a convert to the Catholic faith. This is not surprising when we remember the privations Catholics underwent in pioneer days. There were few priests and fewer churches. Once or twice a year (oftener perhaps in some places), a missionary priest went through the country, ministering to the spiritual needs of the scattered Catholics. At such times the Holy Sacrifice was offered in private houses; confessions heard and the sacraments administered. The Church services were thus shorn of all external splendor, leaving little to attract an outsider. It was on an occasion such as this that Lucy Hoskyns (Mother Clotilda) was baptized at North Lake by one of those traveling missionaries.

The older residents of North Lake and vicinity remember Lucy with affection and have many in-

MOTHER CLOTILDA *in her early teens*

MOTHER CLOTILDA'S MOTHER

teresting incidents to relate of her girlhood. There is a sort of tradition among them that when Lucy was born, a Mrs. Glenn, who washed and dressed her for the first time, spoke words prophetic of future holiness.

They tell us that when Holy Mass was to be offered in the home of Mr. Henry Harris, at a place known as "The Four Corners," Lucy Hoskyns often walked many miles to notify the scattered Catholics of the event. She also assisted in preparing the home of Mr. Harris for the coming of the priest, and would not allow so much as a little stick to remain in the door-yard. She seemed to take an affectionate interest in everybody and everything.

When a young girl in her 'teens, she was especially devoted to the old ladies of the neighborhood. Among other attentions bestowed upon them, she claimed the privilege of arranging the old-fashioned ribbons on their bonnets, so that they would look, as she said, "pretty and well-dressed." There was one old lady, however, who was rather careless about her personal appearance, and did not respond to Lucy's efforts to fix her up like a lady. This woman one day said to Lucy, "Och! Miss Lucy dear, but you will have us all kilt wid your fine manners!"

We, her Sisters, however, see in all this the beginnings, the early manifestations of that holy

zeal and charity for which she was, later, so distinguished, — the disposition "to spend and be spent" for the good of her neighbor.

When only a young girl, it seems to have been the delight of her heart, to gather around her on Sunday afternoons, the little children of the neighborhood to teach them the Catechism and prepare them for their first Holy Communion. An old deserted log-house, the property of Mr. Henry Harris, was utilized for this purpose; and here she assembled the little ones so dear to the heart of our Lord and taught them to know and love the good God; thus foreshadowing the future Apostle of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Later, when Lucy was of proper age, she was employed as teacher in a public school near her home; and in 1862, when the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart opened a boarding school at Monroe, Lucy was one of the first to enter as a resident pupil.

CHAPTER II

Novitiate — Fervor — Profession

THERE was a touching bit of romance in Lucy's early life, which I shall venture to relate. Before entering the boarding school in '62, she became engaged to a non-Catholic, otherwise a very estimable young man.

The saintly Father Joos, the declared enemy of mixed marriages, never ceased to instruct and plead in season and out of season, until his zeal finally triumphed, and Lucy consented to break off the affair. As a consequence, the young man immediately enlisted (the Civil War had reached its third year); was mortally wounded in battle, dying shortly afterward in a hospital; but not till his mother reached his bedside and he had confided to her breaking heart the secret of his enlistment and his love for Lucy Hoskyns.

But Lucy Hoskyns was destined for greater things. She listened to the call of grace, entered the novitiate of the Immaculate Heart, where she received the holy habit on May 12, '63, taking the name of Mary Clotilda.

Throughout the period of her novitiate, she was distinguished for great fervor and generosity

of soul, especially in embracing every opportunity, both great and small, of doing violence to pride, that fault which seeks to find a hiding place in every human heart. Although pride was by no means the predominant defect in this great woman, yet she pursued it from one hiding place to another with an inflexible determination to uproot it, and banish it forever from heart and soul. "Learn of Me," said the Master, "for I am meek and humble of heart"; and Mother Clotilda, who never did things by halves, set herself, from the first day of her novitiate, to learn this divine lesson. Of the thoroughness with which she accomplished this task during her holy and fervent novitiate, her after life gave ample evidence.

Later, when Superior of the Community, whenever this fault appeared in any of those under her care, it met with little mercy. She could treat with leniency and some indulgence all other defects; but that particular fault was so obnoxious to her, that she desired to stifle it in its birth. She strove heart and soul to inculcate the virtue of humility in all those for whose perfection she was responsible; and this she did, not by words only, but chiefly by her holy and humble example.

And so, in the pursuit of every virtue and especially of humility, the happy days of her novitiate glided by, and the great day of her holy Profession was at hand. But this wise virgin had her

lamp replenished with oil, trimmed, and burning brightly, ready to meet the Bridegroom; ready to kneel at the foot of God's altar, and with all the burning love of her great heart, vow body and soul to a life of poverty, chastity, and obedience. With what perseverance and loving exactitude she kept those sacred vows, through a long life to which trials, crosses, and sufferings were not unknown, can best be told by her Sisters in religion. To support her in the struggle, every day brought its measure of precious graces from the God whom she loved and so generously served, and each successive day found her, at its close, nearer and dearer to the loving Heart of Jesus.

When Mother Clotilda, by her holy Profession, became a Sister Servant of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, her extraordinary fervor and love for regular observance were the admiration of all, even in a Community where sanctity was the rule and not the exception.

When she left her novitiate, she did not think that the time of combat was over, — that now she could rest from her labors; but each day saw her begin with renewed energy and with greater earnestness and fervor of spirit, if possible, to go forward to higher and more difficult heights up the Mount of Perfection. For from the day that she left her novitiate to the last hour of her saintly life, Mother Clotilda was a model, an inspiration

for every Sister in the Community. Her lively faith, her spirit of prayer, her ardent love for Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament, her tender devotion to His Infancy and His Sacred Passion, grew with the years and rendered her more and more a shining light, a guiding star to the Community she loved and governed for so many years.*

* Five years after her Profession, she was elected to the office of General Superior, and this burden she carried from '69 to '94 with the exception of six years in which, as will be seen later, she held the almost equally important office of Mistress of Novices.

CHAPTER III

Spirit of Prayer — Devotion to the Sacred Heart — Love of God — Zeal for Souls

HER wonderful and truly admirable spirit of prayer deserves more than a cursory mention. She can truthfully be called a woman of prayer. She had written out a long litany of intentions which she kept on her person and for which she prayed daily, — prominent among these was the "conversion of sinners." How many souls are in Heaven today that would have been lost to God for all Eternity, but for the influence of her holy prayers, and penances offered for their conversion! Very frequently she exhorted the Community to pray for "poor sinners," and all who were straying far from God. We say to ourselves, if a human heart could be so tender and solicitous for them, what would not the Heart of an infinitely loving and merciful God do, if only they would permit Him; if they but put no obstacle in the way of His mercies.

Another of these intentions for which the Sisters were often reminded to pray, was "for priests." She frequently spoke in this wise: —

"Oh, dear Sisters, pray much for priests; they need your prayers. You are comparatively safe

within the walls of your Convent; but priests are in a dangerous position. They are obliged to be in the world, but not of it — a difficult thing to do. You have the companionship of your Sisters, but they, for the most part, are alone. They are human and like company, and here lies one of their great dangers. There are many other dangers which cross their path; so pray fervently for them that God will give them the grace to keep themselves untouched, unsoiled by the world."

On Sunday mornings, and at other times as well, it was a favorite custom of hers to kneel at the Communion-railing, as if to get as close as possible to our dear Lord in the Tabernacle, and there remain for hours absorbed in prayer. Who that saw her and did not feel her own heart kindled to greater fervor, and love for Jesus in the most Blessed Sacrament?

It sometimes happened that Mother Clotilda could not be found in her office or elsewhere. On more than one such occasion, she was discovered hidden away on the Chapel gallery, prostrate in prayer; or with arms extended, her whole soul poured out before God in fervent pleading for some need of the Community.

Her great devotion to the Sacred Heart was perhaps the most noticeable. This devotion she strove to spread and render popular wherever her

MOTHER CLOTILDA
A short time before her death

influence could reach; one of the means made use of for this purpose was to distribute scapulars or badges of the Sacred Heart. She seemed to have a thousand ways of bringing this beautiful devotion to the attention of visitors and all who came within the circle of her persuasive eloquence; and this she did without seeming in the least obtrusive. Her burning love for the Sacred Heart impelled her to endeavor with all her power to make others know and love this beautiful devotion.

No matter how cold, indifferent, or negligent a Catholic a man might be, he never left her presence without being induced to put on the scapular of the Sacred Heart; and that he might have no excuse to neglect it; she gave him one, or then and there pinned one inside his coat. He went away feeling that he had been talking to one of God's saints, and touched by the interest she took in the welfare of his soul, he was moved to look into himself, and with more or less compunction of heart for his past neglects, take the resolution of putting the affairs of his soul in order. There is, perhaps, more than one man in the diocese of Detroit, who could today certify to the truth of these words.

Even when priests visited her, particularly during the last months of her holy life, they left her with their zeal enkindled anew, and more and more resolved to work for God and God alone.

Her zeal knew no bounds except those imposed by the Rule. One or two examples of this holy zeal, although occurring when she was Superior at St. Vincent's, will not be out of place here.

A certain man who had for years neglected the practice of his religion, called at St. Vincent's Convent to purchase a prayer-book and a rosary for his daughter, who was about to make her first Holy Communion. Mother Clotilda, who knew that this man had not been to the sacraments for years, made it a point to meet him. After her talk with him, she pinned a Sacred Heart scapular on the lapel of his coat. On his return home his wife said to him:

"William, you had better put that badge on the inside."

"Do you think I would take that off when Mother Clotilda pinned it there?" he said. "No sir; I will wear it just where her holy hands have put it."

When we are told that this man was likely to attract attention by his fine appearance (a six-footer, handsome, and well dressed), it makes this little incident of the Sacred Heart badge all the more edifying.

A short time after this occurrence, he attended a mission given in a neighboring parish, came back to the Church, and has since remained a practical Catholic.

Examples similar to the foregoing could be multiplied until they would fill a volume. While she was at St. Vincent's, Mother Clotilda seemed to keep a secret list of those back-sliders, — men who, immersed in worldly affairs, in the struggle for riches and this world's honors, little by little forgot the interests of their soul, and finally threw overboard the practice of their holy religion. None of these men ever entered St. Vincent's Convent without meeting our zealous Mother, and putting on the Sacred Heart badge before leaving.

We cannot refrain from giving one more example of her great zeal for such souls: — Mother Clotilda's zeal was not confined to St. Vincent's parish; it reached out to wherever there was a soul in need. Although she did not go to them in person, her holy prayers followed them. On a certain occasion there was a poor unfortunate man, a fallen away Catholic, dying of "delirium tremens" at St. Mary's hospital, Detroit. No one could do anything with him; he lay, tied to his bed, a raving maniac. The General Superior, Mother Mechtildis, was interested in this man; she requested Mother Clotilda, who was at the time Superior of St. Vincent's, Detroit, to go to the hospital to see if she could do anything for him.

Mother Clotilda took a Sister with her, went

to St. Mary's hospital, and asked to be shown to the man's room. When they entered the door, he looked as fierce and angry as if he were about to strike her. At the first sound of her sweet, motherly voice, he grew quiet, and listened attentively to all that she said. Among other things, she spoke to him of his first Holy Communion, and inquired if he did not receive the scapular at that time. On being answered in the affirmative, she obtained his permission to put a scapular on him. Then, gently lifting his head, she slipped the scapular over his shoulders. Her motherly tenderness reached his heart and touched a chord that had long been dormant, — had long ceased to vibrate to accents of kindness.

It seemed to awaken in the poor throbbing brain, long-forgotten memories of brighter and happier days, and he wept like a child. He allowed her to fasten a Sacred Heart scapular to his clothes; took the rosary she brought to him, and promised to say it for her intention as she had requested. She entreated him to go to confession and make his peace with God. When leaving, she promised to pray for him and have all the Sisters at St. Vincent's do the same. He invited her to come again to see him. After receiving the last sacraments, he died a few days later with every mark of a true penitent.

When we reflect on Mother Clotilda's ardent love for God, and great zeal for His glory; her intense desire and longing to win souls to His love; we venture to say that if our saintly Mother had been a man, endowed with the same qualities of heart and soul that distinguished her as a religious, and had entered the holy priesthood, the Church might have had another Francis Xavier.

CHAPTER IV

Humility — Election of '75 — New Regulations — Other Elections

IN Mother Clotilda all religious virtues shone out conspicuously: — her generosity, her entire unselfishness, her motherly tenderness of heart, especially for the sick, were some of the virtues which endeared her to each Sister of the Community. Then in all, and above all, her deep humility, of which she gave a striking example toward the end of her beautiful life when a deadly cancer had nearly finished its work.

She obtained permission from the Superior to go to the Community room when the Sisters were all assembled (it was in the summer vacation), and, kneeling, beg pardon for all the scandal she had given in the past. Imagine, if you can, the feelings of the Sisters, on seeing one whom they had all but idolized as a Superior, and ever looked up to as their model and guide, asking pardon on her knees for scandal that had never been given. Their imperfectly suppressed sobbing, and their deep grief, made the Superior almost regret the permission she had given.

When we reflect that Mother Clotilda had been their Superior for so many years, — that she had received into the Community the great majority of those present on that occasion and had given them their religious training, — that there was not a more honored name in the Community than hers, — we realize a little how profound was the humility of our dear saintly Mother.

Mother Clotilda would have been a great woman and a power for good in any walk of life; but as head of a religious community she had a wider field for the exercise of those splendid qualities, both natural and acquired, for which she was distinguished. She was certainly a great religious Superior; probably, no other in the Community has been more loved and revered.

While she had great zeal for her own perfection, and also for the perfection of those under her care, she never required more of them than they were able to give. She pointed out the way, not so much by words, as by example. We shall probably never realize until we enter Eternity what we owe to the silent influence of her holy life.

She could, of course, in an incredibly short time, reduce one to very small dimensions, if the occasion called for some severity; but the next time you met her, you were greeted with a sweet motherly smile, that would make you

feel restored to favor if, indeed, you had really lost it.

Notwithstanding these occasional severities, there were so many deeds of kindness to offset them, — so much self-sacrificing devotedness and love in her government of the Community, that she must, in strictest justice, be written down as a kind, a very kind Superior, and a true mother to every one of her children.

In '75 when the time for the election of General Superior was approaching, Mother Clotilda appeared to assume a severity, not in keeping with her usual kind way of dealing, — she became more exacting, etc., as if by these means she hoped to turn the tide of votes away from herself, and in another direction. This innocent ruse, if ruse it was, failed to have the desired effect; for when the dreaded day came, the votes of the Community were overwhelmingly in her favor (the small number not given to her being negligible). Then followed on her part, a torrent of bitter tears at the thought that she must continue to carry the burden of Superior, for which she, in her great humility, deemed herself so unfitted.

We never knew anyone who so much feared and dreaded the responsibility of authority and tried so hard to evade it. But she was too good a religious to resist the will of God, made known to her by the voice of the Community; and after

paying the tribute of her tears to her disappointed hopes, she accepted the burden she had hoped to lay down, and was again our loving and lovable Mother. This election called upon her to serve for a third successive term. She had hoped to be free; her disappointment at the result of the election was keen, and her grief correspondingly great.

After the election was over, our spiritual Father sat with us awhile in the Community room. Everyone seemed depressed by our dear Mother's tears, Father Joos himself looking unusually grave. A Sister relieved the tenseness of the situation in a somewhat irregular manner. This Sister had received one vote, and it chanced to be the first one read aloud. In the midst of the gloom which seemed to pervade the very atmosphere, she ventured to exclaim, " O Father, what a narrow escape I had, hadn't I? I thought for a few moments that that basket was just teeming with votes for me." This speech was greeted by a general laugh, Father's grave face taking on a broad smile. While Mother Clotilda did not laugh with us, she dried her tears and strove to take up cheerfully the burden of a third term of office.

Some of my readers may wonder that one so holy should find it so hard to conform to God's will in this one particular. It certainly was not through any lack of generosity that she so much

dreaded the responsibilities of power; she was the very soul of generosity, — so generous was her great loving heart that it would be difficult to believe that she ever refused God any sacrifice, however great; nor did she refuse it then. It was her deep humility that made her believe herself wholly incapable, unfitted to govern the Community. Happily she was the only one who thought so. In the eyes of her Sisters, she was the one best qualified, — the only one to guide the Community and lead it on to perfection. They consequently kept her at the head, notwithstanding her pleadings, until the Right Reverend Bishop Borgess made the unwelcome announcement that thereafter no Superior would hold office longer than two terms. She must retire for at least one term; after which she might be again re-elected an indefinite number of times, if the Community so desired. These regulations were made known to the Sisters when his Lordship came to confirm Mother Clotilda's election for a third term.

It was now our good Mother's turn to rejoice, and ours to do the weeping. Still there was a respite of three years before we had to lose her. It proved to be more nearly four years, as the time for the election of General Superior was changed from the eighth of December to the fifteenth of August. During these four years we might, as best we could, accustom ourselves to the thought of

The Very Reverend EDWARD JOOS, V.G.

seeing another in our dear Mother's place; and also have plenty of time to look about for her successor.

Mother Clotilda was elected to the office of General Superior for the first time in '69, when she was only five years professed. She served the Community in this office from '69 to '79, a period of ten years, having been chosen three terms in succession. In '79, according to the Bishop's regulations, we had to change. The choice of the Community fell upon the gentle and saintly Mother Justina, who had for the previous five years held the important office of Mistress of Novices. Mother Clotilda was at once appointed Mistress of Novices,* an office which she held for the following six years, when she was again placed at the head of the Community by the election of '85. She was re-elected in '88, and again in '91. However, in '94, the regulations regarding elections which had been formulated in '75 by the Right Reverend Bishop Borgess, and held in abeyance by his successor until '94, were now revived, and again promulgated by the Right Reverend Bishop Foley. These regulations obliged the Sisters to elect another to the office of Superior; and as be-

* Mother Clotilda had been four years at the old Cathedral mission, Detroit, when on July 16, 1868, she was called to the Mother House and appointed Mistress of Novices. The following year, December 8, 1869, she was elected to the office of General Superior for the first time.

fore, their choice fell upon the humble and saintly Mother Justina. Mother Clotilda was appointed Superior of St. Vincent's mission, Detroit, a position which, with the exception of one year, she held continuously for eighteen years (1894–1912); and Sister M. Leocadia was made Mistress of Novices, in which office she still serves the Community (1926).

CHAPTER V

Spirit of Penance

FROM the day she entered the Novitiate, Mother Clotilda waged a fierce warfare against her defects, giving no truce, no quarter until they were subdued, and ceased to vex her. She shrank from no means that would enable her to win a complete victory. With all the ardor of her generous nature, she gave herself to bodily austerities. Like St. Bernard of old, there were no lengths to which she might not have gone had she not been held in check by the prudent hand of her wise and holy Director, the Reverend Father Joos. To cite one or two examples of her austerities which happily came to the knowledge of the writer of this biographical sketch:

At the old Cathedral mission, Detroit, Mother Clotilda took charge of preparing "kindling" for the morning fire. This task was accomplished by splitting up old pine boards into all sorts of irregular pieces. She succeeded in secreting a number of these pieces in her apron, and carrying them up to her room unperceived, where she placed them in her bed on the mattress just under the sheet. How our saintly Sister could get a mo-

ment's sleep or rest on such a couch, is beyond the writer's ability to explain. We read of saints, noted for their great austerities, of whom it is related that they slept on a board. A board, it seems to me, would be a feather bed in comparison.

There are persons who could not sleep if there was a bad wrinkle in the sheet; it would be interesting to hear their opinion of our saintly Mother's couch. It would also be interesting to know what our young Sisters of the twentieth century, for whom chiefly this biography of a very saintly Sister is written, — what they think of the valiant women — the saints — who built the foundation of this Community.

There is one more example of Mother Clotilda's appalling austerities which should be mentioned. The writer chanced to see an instrument of penance commonly called a hair-shirt which was worn by this saintly religious. It was made of the coarsest kind of sacking, and was capable, without further trimmings, of putting the wearer into a state of extreme discomfort. To the inner side of this penitential garment, however, were attached bits of sharp-pointed tin and the like, that would pierce the flesh at every change of position. These two examples will serve to illustrate her wonderful spirit of penance.*

* Lest any of my young readers, who might have a de-

Then there are a thousand daily opportunities of practising self-denial in little things, that come to us all if we but profit by them. These are the penitential practices which she earnestly recommended to her Sisters, and which she herself seized and made her own as eagerly as a miser would hoard his pennies. Anyone who has striven to do likewise, will know that to be faithful, even in a measure, to these opportunities of self-denial, constitutes in itself a great penance. One would hardly need any other to arrive at sanctity. Although small, their frequent recurrence makes the difficulty and the merit.

Can we wonder that God Who is never outdone in generosity showered precious graces, without measure, on this privileged soul and that daily and hourly she hastened on to perfection?

It happened with this perfect woman, that notwithstanding her many great qualities of mind and heart and splendid virtues, practised in a heroic degree, there remained one imperfection which seemed to resist all her best efforts to bring under complete control. Her naturally quick temper occasionally got the better of her. This

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sire to enter the religious state, should be disheartened by the penitential practices of our saintly Mother, let me add that the Rule does not require anything of the kind; moreover it is not easy to obtain permission to go beyond the Rule in such matters.

fault, if fault it really was, in an otherwise almost perfect character, was to her a source of the keenest sorrow and of deep humiliation. (The writer had this admission from her own lips.)

Those of us who knew her best felt convinced that God permitted this little asperity of temper to remain in one otherwise so holy, to hide from herself her many splendid virtues, the great heights of sanctity she had attained, and to keep her humble. Who of us would dare to say that this fault did not give more glory to God, because of her sorrow and humiliation, than it could possibly take from Him? that she was not dearer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus after its commission than before, because of this humble and deep sorrow?

CHAPTER VI

A Great Religious Superior — Kindness — Motherly Tenderness

WHEN General Sheridan was about to enter upon his brilliant campaign in the Shenandoah Valley, he received a visit from Secretary Dana. Dana was struck by the devoted affection of the men for their renowned leader. He asked the General for an explanation. "Well," replied Sheridan, "I don't know, unless it be that I do not send them into dangers where I am unwilling to lead. I do not give paper orders from the rear. I lead my men."

And so our wonderful Mother, like all eminent leaders, whether in Church or State, taught by example, rather than by word; she led in the difficult path of perfection.

"Example is the great school of mankind, and they will learn at no other," said the distinguished Edmund Burke; and long before him our Blessed Lord had said, "I give you an example that as I have done to you so you do also." And this great Religious Superior, our saintly Leader, never asked her Sisters to do what she herself had not been first to practise. In fact, she required of

them much less than she herself did and was willing to do. This alone, it seems to me, would establish her right to be called a Great Religious Superior.

If, like St. Peter, some of her spiritual daughters "followed afar off" (*St. Luke* xxii, 54), and lagged a good way behind in the way of perfection, the fault lay, not in their saintly leader, but in their own pusillanimity. They lacked the courage and generosity of soul to follow closely in her holy footsteps; she out-distanced them, and never ceased to press onward and upward until she stood on the lonely heights of the Mount of Perfection. Lonely, did we say? When we used the word, we were thinking of the comparatively few who reach those topmost heights; but they are not lonely to those who have gained them. Those happy souls are encompassed by the Infinite love of the All-holy God, and closely united to Him Whom they love. Heaven has already begun for them, — they enjoy a foretaste of its bliss.

Another and a stronger claim to the title of Great Religious Superior, however, may be found in what follows: — Where Mother Clotilda was Superior, there would be no danger of relaxation creeping in; for from her entrance into the Community, she had distinguished herself by her love for regular observance; and when the voice of the Community placed her at its head, she required

this exact observance from all her Sisters. She was accustomed to say, "Keep your Rule, and your Rule will keep you." Her love for the Rule and her perfect observance of it gave to her Sisters (especially to the younger members who had much to learn) a high esteem and love for its least requirements.

If it appeared to her that Sisters were a little less prompt in assembling for recreation than in going to the Chapel, she would say to them, "Come to your recreation as promptly as you would go to your visit to the Blessed Sacrament; the one is as much a part of your Rule as the other, and must be held equally sacred. The Rule is the voice of God calling you to that particular duty and should be as promptly obeyed in the one case as in the other." It sometimes happened, not often, that a Sister chanced to be a little dilatory in obeying the bell and was, consequently, a few moments late for an exercise. It might be passed over the first time; but if it happened a second or a third time, the delinquent would need an excellent excuse to escape reproof. If there was a sufficient reason, it was not, of course, counted a fault. Our dear Mother was exact, not unreasonable. Still it was not the fear of reproof which caused the Rule to be observed with so much exactitude, but rather the fervent example of our saintly Mother, which so imbued all her Sisters

with esteem and love for even its minutest requirements that its perfect observance was comparatively easy.

The writer would be sorry to give to her readers the impression that, in our dear Mother's interpretation of the Rule, there was anything of the unalterable, the irrevocable spirit, of the "Laws of the Medes and Persians." There was nothing of the kind. She readily dispensed for a good reason. She not seldom took the Sisters by surprise by giving recreation at table on a silence day, when she had reason to think that they were unusually tired. And in many other ways too numerous to mention, she endeavored to create a homelike atmosphere in the Convent. Our dear Mother seemed glad to have a reasonable excuse to give her Sisters some unexpected pleasure.

The following little incident exemplifies this motherly tenderness of heart: Two or three days before the incident occurred, our dear Mother had spoken quite seriously to the Sisters on the subject of holy Poverty, calling attention to many ways in which it could be violated in little things. She stressed particularly the burning of gas unnecessarily, or more than was necessary. A few days later, a Sister lighted the gas in her music room for the five o'clock study, turning it on to the limit. She had no sooner comfortably seated

herself for study than she fell into a deep sleep which lasted until a few minutes of six, — the gas all the while lighting her slumbers with a full blaze. The sleeper, in considerable trepidation, hastened at once to our saintly Mother to accuse herself of what she thought a serious fault against holy Poverty (burning gas for a whole hour unnecessarily). Listen to our saintly Mother's reply:

"You poor child! Why didn't you come to me and ask to lie down? You were too tired to study, and needed the sleep."

The heart of the Mother spoke first. There was no reproach for the wasted gas, — her only concern was for the health and comfort of a hard-working Sister. Could such a Superior fail to be loved, revered, almost idolized by her Sisters?

The following incident which occurred when Mother Clotilda was Superior at St. Vincent's, will further illustrate this motherly tenderness of heart:

It is customary, especially in the primary and the grammar grades of our schools, to decorate the boards with artistic and appropriate borders. To discourage anything like competition in this matter, our good Mother sent all the artists among the Sisters, a half-dozen, perhaps, to each room, instructing them to work together, and finish one room at a time.

One hot day in early September before the opening of school, while the sisters were thus engaged, their good Mother went to the school about ten o'clock, bringing a basket containing cookies, fruits, etc., and a pitcher of lemonade, for the workers. She said to them:

"You poor dear Sisters, you are tired with your morning's work. Rest awhile and take this luncheon. You may have permission to talk for the rest of the morning, as you can work better if you have recreation."

What mother could have shown more tenderness, more concern for her own children than did this saintly Superior for her Sisters? How could such a Superior be otherwise than loved, and dearly loved?

The following letters will further illustrate this goodness of heart:

J.M.J.A.T.
CONVENT I.H.M., MONROE
December 23, '91

My own loved ones at St. Alphonsus,

A most holy, most happy Christmas to each and all of you, and may the dear Infant God fill your hearts with His own holy peace and love and make you His own in time and eternity. Yes, may He make you all His very own, and fill your loving, noble hearts to overflowing with all that is noble, good, and true.

Now, may I ask you all to try very hard to let no one in this dear Community outdo any of you at St. Alphonsus in acquiring true, genuine humility and obedience, charity and self-denial. Oh! do, like darling Sisters, work at your own sanctification; as what are we, any of us, if we are not holy and true to the livery we wear?

A Sister was "telling her reading" a few evenings ago and among other things she told us that St. Theresa had a vision in which she saw several Religious in Heaven in different degrees of glory; and St. Theresa said after that she would be most happy to suffer all earthly afflictions to gain one wee bit more of glory in Heaven; so, my dear loved ones, let us try our best, not to lose one single grace when they are so precious. How do we know how long we have to work for God! Let us "make hay while the sun shines"; oh! yes; let us mint money for Heaven.

Now, let me wish you all a most happy Christmas, — one filled with God's choicest blessings and graces. On Christmas morning when you have the dear little Infant in your hearts, oh then pray for poor me. Love from all your Sisters at old home; we will be with you in spirit.

Your own loving and devoted,

Sister M. Clotilda, S.M.

The following letter, though not dated, was probably written in the late '90's. Mother Clotilda had sent this Sister to Detroit to be under the care of a specialist.

My own dear little Sister,

Your letter received, — all very satisfactory; only I am so sorry that you are suffering so much. Be sure to go to bed early; and stay in bed in the morning when you think it would do you good. Now you have time to rest and be sure to do so; also lie down during the day when you feel that it will do you good and rest you. Do not mind trying to go around to the missions, unless you really want to do so. You are perfectly free to go, or not to go.

Yes, or course, stay at Holy Trinity, as it is so convenient to the Doctor's office. Sister Clementine is still sick; Sister Elinor still in school, and doing well; so be easy about your class, — all will be well till you get home. . . . Do not hurry the doctor at all; let him have all the time he needs.

Let me know if there is anything you want and I'll send it. The children show a lovely spirit in your regard; they are very nice with Sister; but very lonesome for you; and so are we all. A thousand times a minute, God bless my Sister Odilla.

Your own loving,

Sister M. Clotilda, S.M.

On the occasion of a Silver Jubilee

J.M.J.A.T.
CONVENT I.H.M., MONROE
May, '92

My very dear Sister Colette,

Can it be possible that twenty-five long years have passed into eternity, since you knelt at the foot of God's holy altar, and promised to serve Him alone for the rest of your noble life? Oh! yes; it is no dream, is it dear Sister? Well you know it is not a dream. What a precious life of merit you have won for yourself during these long, long years of hard work and love!

Yes; my own loved Sister, you have been ever faithful and true to your loved Mother, the Community; and in our beautiful Home, Heaven, you will get your reward. You have also an earthly reward in the knowledge that your dear Sisters in religion love and revere one who has ever been so faithful, so true.

Little did you realize on that day, ever to be remembered, when you made your solemn engagements, what was before you during those long years of toil; but even if you had known, you would not, I am sure, have faltered, but have gone nobly on to meet the bitter and the sweet.

Now, we know not what the future may bring you, but may every moment of it be filled with noble deeds; and, if possible, may each one be

more noble, more self-sacrificing, more generous than those which preceded; and may each one bring you, my own loved Sister, nearer and dearer to the Sacred Heart of Him, Whose sworn Spouse you are. May He ever look on you with love, known only to Himself, Who is love itself.

We place the enclosed prayers in the hands of our Immaculate Mother to dispose of for you in the way she and you wish. May God bless you a thousand times each moment of your life is the wish of

Your own
Sister M. Clotilda, S. M.

Sister Colette

We are confident that it will interest our readers to learn that dear Sister Colette lived to realize all the good wishes and blessings conveyed in the foregoing letter. She celebrated the Golden Jubilee of her holy Profession, on May 29, 1917; and seemed to grow daily in holiness and sweetness of spirit until the last day of her beautiful life. Dear Sister Colette was one of those hidden saints, who do not seem to attract the attention of others. Unless you study them closely you do not become aware of what lives of self-sacrifice and devotedness they are living. They go on from day to day, down through the years, living their

THE PRESENT CONVENT (*rear view*)

uneventful lives, little noticed by those around them; and without thought of self, doing all their actions, the least as well as the greatest, for God and God alone. Their light is destined to shine only in Eternity. Such was the quiet, retiring, unassuming life of our saintly Sister Colette.

The following quotation is copied from the Community annals:

"'A saint has left Marshall!' was the exclamation heard on all sides, when Miss Mary Martin, our dear Sister Colette, bade farewell to home and dear ones, on that memorable morning in May, sixty years ago. On the morning of December 3, 1925, when the announcement of her death was made to the Community, every heart echoed the same sentiment, 'A saint has departed!'

"The life of this good religious exemplified all those virtues that characterize the true servants of God. As a novice, a simple Sister, a local superior, Sister Colette was ever a model of charity, piety, a loving reverence for authority, and a gentle, childlike humility. She died as we think she would have wished to die, in the silence of the night and alone. Although an inmate of the infirmary, — weak, owing to her advanced years; nothing told us that the end was so near. She had previously received the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, and on December second, Holy Com-

munion and Penance. She was like one waiting for the last journey — a journey she longed to take."

Her holy death, like her beautiful life, was hidden in the loving Heart of an Infinite God.

The foregoing letters, written when Mother Clotilda was General Superior, prove better than words of mine could do, that the heart of our saintly Mother was most loving and tender — the heart of a true mother. Indeed, were we to single out from her many brilliant virtues, those most prominent and characteristic, we should say love for God and His most holy will, and love of her neighbor for God's dear sake; in one word — Charity.

Her charity extended to every possible need of soul and body; and was so boundless that it included every creature in the wide, wide world, created to know and love God. We have thought it well to subjoin a few of the "Intentions" for which she daily offered her holy prayers and good works:

1. A great love of God, and an increase of His holy love at every instant.
2. A great love for, and perfect comformity in all things to God's most holy will.
3. A most profound humility and an increase of it every day of my life.

4. A perfect spirit of prayer.
5. That every act I perform may be a continual thanksgiving each moment of my life.
6. The forgiveness of all my sins; and final perseverance.
7. For a most holy and happy death for myself and all my relatives.
8. That whatever sufferings God has in store for me, I may bear them in the manner most pleasing to His Divine Majesty.
9. The sanctification of every soul in existence and until the end of time.
10. That I and every soul will have the grace to do all the good we can while we live.
11. That without taking from myself, I ask these "Intentions" for every soul created to know and love God.

(These "Intentions" show how all-embracing was the zeal and charity of our fervent Mother.)

CHAPTER VII

Charity to the Sick — Brief Sketch of Sister M. Flora

A SAINT has said, "If you wish to know whether the spirit of God reigns in a Community, ask how the sick are treated."

Mother Clotilda was remarkable for kindness to the sick; she was more than merely kind; she was devoted to them, frequently serving them with her own hands. This was particularly true of her during the eighteen years she was local Superior at St. Vincent's. As General Superior, there were too many pressing and important duties that claimed her time, to permit her to serve the sick; but she visited them frequently, and saw to it that they had proper care.

The Infirmarians who had charge of the sick in those early days, while not trained nurses, made up in great part for their lack of professional training by an entire devotedness and a fund of practical knowledge with a certain skill, acquired by long experience in the service of the sick.

Without a doubt, there is many a Sister doing useful work in the Community today, who would,

long years ago, have been claimed by the cemetery but for the wise and devoted care given by those same Infirmarians.

Sister M. Flora

THE writer's desire to give, just here, a brief sketch of the chief Infirmarian of those early days is too strong to be resisted; principally because she thinks it would please our dear Mother to have a bit of that Sister's story entwined with her own; — for if our saintly Mother had any favorite among her blue-robed daughters, that favorite was Sister Mary Flora — and deservedly so; for, in dependableness, trustworthiness, capableness, she was unsurpassed by any of her Sisters. The word " favorite " is not to be here understood in any unworthy sense of the term. Our dear Mother's big heart had room for us all, — the least useful as well as those who, like our good Sister Flora made themselves, by their myriad forms of usefulness, almost indispensable to the Superior; in this preference Mother Clotilda was simply exercising her sense of values.

Sister Flora's spirit of self-sacrifice, of devotedness, of generosity, with their kindred qualities determined Mother Clotilda, at an early date, to place her in charge of the sick; so that before her year of novitiate was completed, she was appointed Infirmarian. In this charge she had an

opportunity of practising that forgetfulness of self; that devotedness for which she had been distinguished even in her girlhood days when she gave herself so entirely to the care of her dear widowed mother. How well she fulfilled the duties of Infirmarian, the grateful love of her Sisters gives evidence. Although it is several years since loss of health compelled her to resign into other hands the care of her "dear sick," her Sisters still speak of her kindness, and frequently refer to her as "the dear old saint."

We are all familiar with these beautiful words of our Blessed Lord: "Whatsoever ye do to the least of these, My brethren, ye do it unto Me." In these brief words we find the secret of all this self-sacrificing devotedness; she saw in her sick the Person of Jesus Christ and served our Blessed Lord in them.

Sister Flora held the office of Chief Infirmarian for thirty years. During this long period of arduous duties she never seemed to know fatigue, or think she was entitled to a little rest. On this point her Superior had to think for her.

She was gifted with an unusually large fund of common sense and good judgment; hence her Superior and Sisters reposed entire confidence in her in the manifold duties which gradually came under her superintendence. In the spring and the summer, notwithstanding these numerous duties,

she found time each day to work in the garden and the park. This time spent among the flowers and in the glorious sunshine helped, no doubt, to postpone to a later day the final breakdown of this remarkable woman.

In this little sketch the usual order in biography has been reversed. We must now tell our readers who the subject of this sketch is.

Sister Mary Flora, known in the world as Catherine Collins, was born March 14, 1844, in County Limerick, Ireland. When Kate (as she was familiarly known to her friends) was less than three years of age, her parents came to this country and settled in Detroit; at that time, a city of not more than nineteen thousand inhabitants. Mr. Collins found the land of his adoption a land of opportunity; and the outlook from the first gave promise of a bright and successful future. There were a few years of unfailing prosperity when suddenly the shadow of a great sorrow flung itself across this hopeful future, turning all its brightness into deepest gloom. The Silent Reaper entered that happy household and took from it the devoted husband and father. The "Cholera scourge" had visited the city and Mr. Collins became one of its many victims, leaving a widow and seven children to mourn his loss.

However, this world of ours never stands still. The years sped by, bringing many changes to this

bereaved family. At an early age, Kate's brothers and sisters were happily married, and settled in homes of their own; leaving their mother to the devoted care of their youngest sister, Kate, now grown to young womanhood.

From her earliest years Kate had manifested a most remarkable and tender devotion to the Blessed Mother of God. This devotion and love grew with her years, until it became, next after God's love, the overmastering passion of her heart. Side by side with this deep love there grew up in her heart an ardent desire to consecrate herself to God in the religious state; but as the care of her widowed mother devolved upon her, she was without hope of ever being able to realize this cherished desire. She, therefore, said little about this longing of her heart, as she knew that her generous mother would make any sacrifice to give her to God. In fact, Mrs. Collins, a typical mother of holy Ireland, would look upon it, not in the light of a sacrifice, but as it truly is, the greatest honor God could confer on her daughter, — to choose her for so exalted a vocation. She would see in it an occasion, not for sighs and tears, but of joy and exultation of spirit; of fervent thanksgiving to God for this supreme gift — the grace to consecrate body and soul to His service in the religious state. When, therefore, this good mother became aware of her daughter's wish to enter the

Convent, she gave without hesitation a willing consent; and set to work at once to make arrangements whereby Kate would be left free to follow her holy vocation. In a short time all arrangements were completed and it only remained to say good-bye; but the ties of long and close companionship between mother and daughter could not be severed without pain to both, — particularly to the dear old mother who was so generously parting with her favorite daughter. However, in the Convent, Kate's prayers will do more for her loved mother than her willing hands were able to do when at home.

Her postulate was spent in fervent preparation for the reception of the holy habit, which ceremony took place December 8, 1869. The new novice was to be known thereafter as Sister Mary Flora. One year later her happiness was made complete when she pronounced those vows by which she became the Bride of Christ forever. During a long life in religion, she has ever been distinguished by her exact observance of her holy Rule.

She celebrated the Golden Jubilee of her profession December 8, 1920. On this joyous occasion, she was joined by a number of her nieces and nephews, who came to rejoice with her on the happy occasion. They gave her a handsome purse of one hundred dollars in gold. Later, because her

name and work had, for many years, been associated with the park, they presented her with a beautiful large statue of Our Lady of Lourdes and an accompanying statue of the little Bernadette, to be placed in the new grotto that is to be. This gift is to serve as a future memorial of good Sister Flora; that her Sisters may keep in remembrance her many virtues and generous service rendered the Community, and be reminded to say a solitary "Ave" for the holy repose of her soul.

This article has already exceeded the limits set to it before writing; but we should like to mention one or two more of the many activities which filled this noble, saintly life: She was a sort of self-constituted night-watch. When it came time to retire, every Sister could seek her pillow in peace and rest secure; for was not Sister Flora on guard? She was always on the alert; nothing seemed to escape her vigilance.

In cold or zero weather, she made a visit, during the night, to the dormitories of the pupils, to make sure that all were properly covered and comfortable; often tucking in the covering where needed. If the house were too cold, or if there might be danger of the steam pipes freezing, she arose at midnight or later, taking for companion a Sister, went down two flights of stairs to the furnace, shoveled in coal, and waited till the fire was burning well so that she could close off the

draft; then sought her couch for a little rest before morning. When and where this generous Sister got the amount of sleep required by poor tired human nature is a problem which the writer does not undertake to solve.

However, the day came when those secret reservoirs of heretofore unfailing energy were slowly but surely becoming exhausted; and dear Sister Flora was finally compelled to give up all work requiring strength of muscle. She continued for many years longer to superintend the garden and park, but a boy or a man was employed to do the heavy work; eventually this loved occupation had to be resigned; and her time is now employed in making scapulars in honor of Our Blessed Lady; and let it be said in passing that these scapulars are made with the greatest perfection. She spends many an hour each day, in the chapel, in close and fervent communion with her Eucharistic God. She is still living (1926), quietly, and peacefully awaiting the Master's loving call.

CHAPTER VIII

Charity to the Sick — Cures Attributed to Mother Clotilda

"SISTER, which of our dear Mother's virtues or good qualities would you like to see especially stressed in this biography?" This question was addressed to not a few of the Sisters who had been with Mother Clotilda at St. Vincent's. The answer without a single exception, was something like the following:

"O Sister, be sure to speak of her charity and kindness, particularly to the sick." Without waiting to be interrogated on the subject, they often volunteered such information. One little Sister, who never knows a well day, but is, nevertheless, always on duty, said to the writer,

"O Sister, do not forget to speak of our dear Mother's lovely charity and kindness, especially to the sick. I never saw anything like it. Whenever a Sister was confined to the Infirmary, she would insist on climbing those stairs many times a day just to inquire how the Sister was feeling, if she needed anything, etc.; sometimes she brought a nice drink; again it was some little dainty to tempt the appetite. She would sit at the

bedside of the sick and read to them; or pray with them. I could go on, in this way, indefinitely, and still fail to enumerate all her many acts of loving kindness."

While our dear Mother thought nothing too good for the sick, on the other hand, she expected the sick to behave in all things as true religious. The following points taken from an instruction given when she was Mistress of Novices will illustrate:

1. Try as much as you can to hide your pains and sufferings from all except those to whom you should make them known.
2. Never mind it, when not noticed by any one.
3. Try as much as possible to spare the Infirmarian, and let her have her night's rest.
4. Never find fault with the doctor.
5. Never complain of the food no matter how much you may dislike it; but always try, at such times, to remember the gall and vinegar, given to our dear Lord on His deathbed, the Cross.
6. Never complain to any one of anything whatever.
7. Show gratitude for every favor or act of kindness.

Although the following incident belongs to a much later period, when our dear Mother's life

was painfully drawing to its close, it will not be out of place here.

A young Sister was at that time an inmate of the Infirmary — a victim of tuberculosis of the lungs. The disease had reached a very advanced stage at the time of which we are writing; such progress had it made that our dear little Sister was subject to frequent and severe hemorrhages. She was young and ambitious to live and work; hence put up a desperate fight for life. Yet she was, notwithstanding, slowly but surely losing in the struggle. The disease seemed each day to get a deeper and surer hold on its victim.

One day after an unusually severe hemorrhage, she lost courage completely, burst into tears, and wept long and bitterly; in the midst of her tears, she hastened to our saintly Mother's room for a word of comfort and advice. On entering the room, her tears still flowing freely, she exclaimed:

"O Mother help me! Cure me! You can if you will!"

The sight of her tears and her distress called out all the deep sympathy of our Mother's tender heart. Her consoling reply was not slow in finding utterance.

"Sister, I will do what I can."

After a little talk with our saint, Sister full of courage and confidence, her tears dried, returned to her room. The rest of the story is soon told.

Sister never had another hemorrhage. From that hour her health began to mend; the following September (1914) she was again placed in school where she has been up to the present (1926). To all appearances, she has been and is a perfectly well Sister; but only the dear good God knows the price which our generous Mother paid for this favor.

You may, or may not, call this a miracle. The cure was, without doubt, obtained by Mother Clotilda; and to say the very least, it is a striking example of her power with God.

Another incident, while not so important as the one just recorded, is, still, well deserving of mention. A Sister of St. Vincent's Mission had been vaccinated; her arm became very badly swollen and extremely painful, growing worse from day to day. For nearly a week the sufferer had been unable to sleep. Mother Clotilda, full of compassion for her suffering Sister, put her holy hands around the swollen arm, her lips, the while, moving in prayer; then said aloud:

"Good night, dear Sister; God bless you; now try to sleep."

Sister, straightway, fell asleep and did not awaken until the following morning, when she found herself lying on what had been a very sore arm, but now entirely well, swelling and pain all

gone. The Sister in whose favor the cure was wrought called it a miracle. This much, however, is certain: Mother Clotilda effected the cure; but again, only the good God and herself know at what price.

These two cures with one yet to be recorded in which a Sister recovered her hearing through the intercession of our saintly Mother, are the only cures attributed to her that have, as yet, chanced to come to the knowledge of the writer. It is possible, however, that there may be many others who have received similar favors, but who have forgotten to give credit where credit and thanksgiving were due.

In the Holy Gospel we read that our Blessed Lord, on a certain occasion, healed ten lepers; but only one returned to give thanks. How touching the plaint of the Master:

"Were not ten healed; and where are the nine?"

Since our Blessed Lord uttered that sad reproach, human nature, down through the centuries, has ever been prone to be forgetful and ungrateful for favors; so it is possible with regard to Mother Clotilda, that others may have been helped by her holy intercession and have not thought to make it known; have departed, like the "Nine," without returning thanks.

CHAPTER IX

Charity to God's Poor

ST. ALPHONSUS tells us in his "Spouse of Christ," that the most perfect charity consists in zeal for our neighbor's spiritual good. While Mother Clotilda's zeal for the welfare of souls was boundless, she was not without tender sympathy for the needs of the body also. She gave aid to God's poor to the extent of her ability; and what she could not do herself, she endeavored to do through her many friends. Second-hand clothing, money, and even food, were liberally supplied by those same friends. On one occasion which chanced to come to the writer's knowledge, Mrs. Dunnigan, the mother of one of the senior Sisters, sent Mother Clotilda fifty dollars for her poor — a handsome sum in those days; equivalent to four times that amount today.

It is a difficult matter to speak of such charities, as Superiors keep those matters as secret as possible; observing the Scriptural injunction: "Not to let the left hand know what the right hand doeth." However, there is a tradition in the Community that charity to the poor has always been

a favorite virtue of the Immaculate Heart; and has been practiced in a heroic degree from the very beginning of the Institution, even when the Community itself was the poorest of the poor.

It is related in the life of Mother Mary Joseph, who was General Superior of the little Community from 1859–'64, that she gave twenty-five cents to a poor woman who asked for money to get medicine for her sick husband. It was all the money there was in the house at the time. Mother Mary Joseph told the woman so, asking her at the same time to pray that God would send us more. A few hours later a man called at the door and gave five dollars to the portress. When asked for his name, he replied:

"God knows my name; that is sufficient." Many such incidents might be recorded; but we shall give just one more example of the Godlike charity of those early days.

Mother Mary Joseph heard through the Reverend Director, Father Joos, of a so-called Catholic family who were living in extreme destitution. They had given one of their two little girls to a Protestant family. Mother Mary Joseph begged that she herself might go to recover, if possible, this precious soul. With Reverend Father's approval, she and her companion set out at once on their errand of mercy. When they arrived at the house, these people refused to give the

girl up without remuneration for their trouble in cleaning and washing the child. They finally consented to let the Sisters have her for ten dollars. To their great surprise, Mother Mary Joseph agreed to their terms at once. Promising to return in a short time with the required sum, she set out for home. The Reverend Director wishing to share in the good work gave one-half the amount. Mother Mary Joseph, without waiting to rest, hastened back with the ten dollars and to her great joy, secured possession of the little girl.

Shortly after this occurrence she obtained possession of this little girl's sister — a child of five years, but from neglect hardly able to walk, and scarcely as large as a delicate child of two years. Her shiftless parents were only too willing to give her to the Sisters. When Mother Mary Joseph arrived at the child's wretched home, the little one was lying on some filthy straw thrown on the floor in a corner of a very dirty room. It is more than probable that the eyes of the refined and cultured Phoebe Walker (Mother Mary Joseph) never before rested on such a picture of wretched squalor and utter misery. She insisted on carrying the child in her arms to the Convent; although to most persons the poor little creature would have been an object of loathing, because of her emaciated and filthy condition. When Mother Mary Joseph reached home with her precious

burden, she carried her to her own room and, laying her upon her own bed, at once proceeded to wash and cleanse the poor neglected little body. She then dressed her in fresh clean clothes and gave her to the Sisters. Only after all this had been done would Mother Mary Joseph consent to take some dinner, although the dinner hour was long past.

If the Community has been blest with material prosperity (and it has), it is, without doubt, owing in a large measure, to kindness to God's poor.

CHAPTER X

Humility in the Concrete

WE have spoken of the ardor with which our saintly Mother gave herself to the acquisition of the virtue of humility, particularly in the earlier years of her religious life. As the pursuit of this somewhat rare virtue was continued down through the years of a long and holy life, it might not be out of order, before finally dismissing the subject, to mention a few examples of the way in which our humble Mother practised so necessary a virtue:

To ask information on a subject that she, herself, was perfectly well acquainted with, better, perhaps, than the one of whom she asked the information, was a little artifice often made use of by her to practise an exterior act of humility. Those who knew her best understood perfectly well the little ruse and its object, and were never misled by it. On one occasion, however, when the Sisters had assembled for the evening recreation, and as is customary in pleasant weather, were about to go out for a walk, Mother called one of the youngest Sisters to accompany her. During the walk Mother said to her:

"Sister, I should like you to explain to me subtraction of fractions."

The Sister, who was a brilliant mathematician, set to work immediately to do as requested; no doubt marveling in her own bright mind, how it could be possible that her Superior, a woman of such splendid presence, and the admiration of all who ever met her, did not even know common fractions! When Sister had finished her explanation, Mother asked very humbly if it would be too much to repeat it? Sister did so; Mother thanked her, and expressed herself satisfied.

Later, much to her confusion, this clever young Sister learned that Mother Clotilda was an excellent mathematician, had taught in the public schools before entering the Convent, and that the explanation was asked for the sole purpose of humbling herself in the eyes of one of her Sisters.

Mother Clotilda, not infrequently, asked her Sisters to point out to her her faults. On a certain occasion, she put a timid little Sister under obedience to tell her within the following week some fault that she would like to see her correct. It is probable that this Sister had never before spent so distressful a week. The very idea of trying to find a fault in her Superior who was regarded as a saint by all who knew her, almost paralyzed thought. When the week was drawing to a close,

our little Sister gathered together sufficient courage to say:

"Mother, sometimes when you look very serious, I feel afraid of you."

Mother said something very consoling and encouraging in reply; and, our little Sister, now that the dreaded ordeal was over could again breathe freely; but had our kind-hearted Mother realized how much this obedience would cost the Sister, she would hardly have imposed it.

None of her Sisters ever heard Mother Clotilda speak of anything that could possibly tend to her own praise. Her father, as we have seen, belonged to a distinguished family of the English nobility. No matter how much we Americans affect, in theory, to make light of such distinctions, in practice, we prize them as much, perhaps more, than do our aristocratic neighbors on the other side of the ocean. Many a large American fortune has crossed the sea to purchase such a title.

However, what we wish to say here is, that during a long religious life of over fifty years, not one of her Sisters ever heard Mother Clotilda so much as hint at the fact that her father was of the English nobility. The Superior who admitted her to the novitiate knew; it was her right to inquire into the respectability of a candidate's family; but in mentioning this matter to the Supe-

rior, Lucy Hoskyns (Mother Clotilda) exacted from her a promise that this distinction should never be made known to the Community in her life-time; and the promise was faithfully kept. Only when the account of her holy death and obsequies were given to the press was this secret made known.

In the late '80's it became a problem to find sleeping accommodations for our dear "missionary Sisters" when they came home for the summer vacation. It was finally decided to convert one of the schoolrooms in the old Academy into a temporary dormitory. It lacked, of course, many of the conveniences of the regular Community dormitories.

Mother Clotilda as General Superior was certainly entitled to a private room; but private rooms were not many in those days; and they were chiefly for the aged and the infirm. Mother Clotilda usually slept in a Community dormitory. Now, however, she gave up her bed, and took one in the newly improvised dormitory, much against the wishes of her Sisters; but she was not to be dissuaded from her purpose; if there were inconveniences to be borne, she would be the first to share them. She slept in that temporary dormitory all that summer vacation, giving to her Sisters an example of humility and

generosity, which those who saw it will be slow to forget.

One of the things we most admired in our saintly Mother was her entire forgetfulness of self. Early in her religious career she had become enamored of a life of self-denial for God's love, and she found in it a happiness incomparably greater than the votaries of this world find in a life of self-indulgence. She persevered in this spirit of self-sacrifice until the last hour of her holy life. Mother Clotilda was one of the most generous and loving souls it has ever been our privilege to know.

The completion of the new chapel early in 1890, gave, for additional living space, the old chapel, the lower story of which was converted into an infirmary, and the second story divided into a number of sleeping rooms, thus rendering unnecessary the temporary dormitory of the previous summer. Five years later (1895) the large addition to the east side, — the old St. Edward's Hall, now known as the Novitiate, — was built. This made students and Sisters comfortable for a few years only. Long before the handsome large building,* on the opposite side of the street, arose (1906), every available square foot of space in the buildings on the bank of the Raisin River had

* See illustration at page 206.

been utilized and the problem of finding room for our rapidly growing boarding school became more acute than ever. It was again temporarily solved by the building of the College (1906), and the "Hall * of the Divine Child" (1917), a handsome, up-to-date, fire-proof building, — a boarding school for boys under fourteen years of age.

We are assured of a lasting and final solution of the troublesome problem, now that beautiful Marygrove rears its lofty towers heavenward, and gives promise to be ready for occupancy, God willing, September, 1927.

It seems hardly possible that the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart will ever again have to wrestle with the old problem of "lack of living space," either in lands or buildings. These needs appear now to be amply provided for, far into the future.

The writer trusts that the pages of this biographical sketch, thus far, have clearly demonstrated that Mother Clotilda was a great religious Superior. With regard to her qualifications as a builder in material things, the writer cannot speak with any degree of certainty; for during the years that she held the office of General Superior, the Right Rev. Monsignor Joos, Director and Superior of the Community, took the work of

* See facing illustration.

HALL OF THE DIVINE CHILD, *Monroe, Michigan*

A school for boys under fourteen years

building entirely into his own hands; thus relieving the Superior of so much of her burden. During the forty-four years he was Director of the Community, all of the group of buildings on the river bank arose under his direction and superintendence; each one, in its turn, to fill a pressing need of the Community.

When dear Father passed to his Eternal reward in 1901, the General Superior, Mother Mechtildis, was thereby forced to carry her burden alone. She proved to have the genius of the builder in a remarkable degree; and that this genius was not at all incompatible with the humble blue habit.

However, an account of the buildings erected and the lands acquired by her and her successor since the opening of the twentieth century, does not belong in this biography. When the history of the past twenty-five years shall be written, the progress of the Community in material things will read like a fairy tale.

CHAPTER XI

Mother Clotilda Mistress of Novices — Spirit of the Novitiate — A Severe Test

A FEW words should be said of Mother Clotilda as Mistress of Novices, a position which she held from '79 to '85, and for which she was eminently fitted both by nature and grace.

Her motherly and sympathetic heart contributed more, perhaps, than any of her brilliant virtues, to make her an ideal Mistress of Novices; for when a young girl breaks home ties and tears herself away from all that is dearest in life and enters the novitiate, she is more in need of kind and loving sympathy, and tender guidance, than at any subsequent period of her religious career. As Mistress of Novices her motherly heart enabled her to give all this; and to pour into a suffering heart just the comfort and the consolation needed. She led each new candidate to the feet of our loving Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, the true Source of all Consolation, and instructed her to make a complete offering of her heart and its pain to the Sacred Heart of Jesus; and none ever failed to come away strengthened and consoled.

ST. MARY'S NOVITIATE

As time went on, all their difficulties, their sorrows and trials, family troubles, etc., were confided to that same Mother's great, loving heart. She consoled and advised; and, little by little led them to take a spiritual view of all these trials; to see the loving hand of an All-wise Father in all that happens whether joyful or sorrowful; and to bear all these crosses in such a way as to be pleasing to the good God and meritorious to themselves.

Sister Annunciata, who had the happy privilege of being one of Mother Clotilda's novices, says of her: "I loved Mother Clotilda as much as I ever loved my own Mother. The Novitiate was home." Others of her novices have spoken in like manner.

Sister R., one of her novices, says of her: "Whenever she required something hard of one of us, there was a look of sympathy in her motherly face that took the sting out of the humiliation, and made us feel that she was acting from a sense of duty. Her example and way of dealing with us novices made the difficult things of religious life seem amiable and desirable. Our sorrows were her sorrows, and our joys her joys. She was like one's own mother, and all her novices loved her as such." No higher praise, it would seem, could be given to a Mistress of Novices.

It was her duty, of course, to test her novices well; and let it be said right here, that she did not in the least fail in this duty. She endeavored to train them to prompt and cheerful obedience, humility, forgetfulness of self, and all the many virtues that should adorn the soul of a religious. She tried their obedience well and occasionally imposed some pretty severe tests. To illustrate: A certain little novice, who, at the time, seemed to her saintly Mistress somewhat deficient in holy humility, was told to take a basket of machine-made woolen stockings, go into the city, and sell them. She was instructed to call at every store on the principal street of the city, until she had succeeded in disposing of the stockings. On this street were to be found bakeries, hardware stores, candy stores, besides dry-goods stores. She and her companion, a postulant, went from door to door, offering the stockings for sale and receiving from the proprietors various excuses for their inability to buy.

They finally had the good fortune to enter a shoe store whose proprietor was a Catholic. He seemed to understand the situation at once, and bought the whole lot without demur; and with as much cheerful good will as if these stockings were the most desirable of investments. The poor humbled little vendor of woolen stockings went home

rejoicing that she had succeeded in fulfilling the obedience imposed upon her.

The further history of these stockings is veiled in obscurity. It is more than probable, however, that kind Mr. M., the purchaser, gave them away to every poor, rheumatic old lady of his acquaintance until they were off his hands. Although his Catholic heart enabled him, to some extent, to divine the situation, still he could have realized but faintly the great service he had rendered a timid little novice by helping her to carry out a difficult obedience.

But we must not trespass further. There are things too sacred to be exposed to the gaze of the thoughtless and the lovers of this world; they are not understood by them.

The novitiate is holy ground — a school of perfection. Within its walls young souls are trained in the most difficult and most important of sciences. They have to begin at the A B C's of religious life and go forward step by step until its difficult lessons are learned.

They who fondly imagined that they had passed the alphabet stage before entering the novitiate usually have the hardest time, as such not unfrequently have to unlearn what they thought they had learned, and then begin at the lowest round of the ladder. In the School of Per-

fection, "Credits" are of no avail. Thorough knowledge, exemplified in daily practice is all that counts here.

However, these holy lessons with the occasional failures to realize them in practice are too sacred to be recorded by other than angel hands; and we shall leave the novitiate and its fervent inmates to their holy seclusion.

To compensate in a measure those who were disappointed when the door of the novitiate was so abruptly closed just now, we shall relate an amusing incident which may be called

A postulant's first lesson in prompt obedience

The first day Sister C. spent in the novitiate, Mother Clotilda took her for a little walk in the Convent park. Among other things, our good Mother said to her that this was her home, that she should feel and act as if she were in her own father's house, etc.

A few days later this postulant was sent to town by her Mistress to deliver a rather important message. It was a typical November day, the sky overcast by clouds and a chilling wind blowing. Our very-much-at-home postulant thought it wise to make herself a cup of hot tea before going out into the chill November air.

Mother Clotilda chanced to pass through the

kitchen at this time and much to her surprise saw our good postulant, in shaker and shawl, standing near the stove. The following bit of dialogue ensued:

"What are you doing, Sister?"

"Making myself a cup of tea, Mother."

"Have you been to town?"

"No, Mother; I am going when I get my tea."

Mother Clotilda passed on without further speech, leaving the good postulant to enjoy her tea. At the evening recreation, this postulant chanced to be seated opposite Mother who, on seeing her, began to laugh quite heartily. Mother said, "Sister, do you know that I am laughing at you?"

"No, Mother."

"Come here and I will tell you."

Mother told her in a whisper; then, with the permission of the postulant, Mother related to the assembled novices the story of the "cup of tea." Needless to say that the novices enjoyed the little incident, and that our well-intentioned postulant received an important lesson in prompt obedience which was never forgotten; and this, too, without any accompanying heartaches. Our saintly Mother knew how to wait; how to bring souls to God by the least thorny path.

Perhaps a word of explanation regarding the

"shaker" may not be amiss here as few, if any, of my young readers have ever seen one. It was a "poke" bonnet, made of straw; in form more like the Salvation Army bonnet than anything else in existence today, with this exception: there was attached to the neck of the shaker, a little cape about one-half yard in length, which hung over one's back, arms, and shoulders. This cape was of any material, — usually of chambray — pink, blue, or brown, according to the taste of the wearer. It was much in vogue fifty or sixty years ago.

For many years, or as long as the shaker was on the market, it was the outdoor headdress of our postulants. Of course, when worn by the postulants, the cape was brown or black in color. While new, the shaker was not bad looking; still, it was, at best, very different from the dainty black lace cap worn by our twentieth century postulant.

We have said that, while new, the shaker was pretty fair; but you seldom saw a new one. They were passed on from generation to generation of postulants and worn as long as they held together, and then a little longer. Good Sister C. of the "cup of tea" incident tells us that the shaker in which she was arrayed on that chill November morning, had a good-sized hole in its crown. The present Mistress of Novices says that the crown

of her shaker was so far demolished as to leave bare a good part of the back of her head.

I fancy I hear our postulant of the future laughing as she reads these lines. But that shaker may be regarded from another point of view. If the young lady of those days entered the novitiate to become a saint, the battered-up shaker could be a powerful ally. It would help her much to acquire that virtue which is the foundation of all sanctity — true humility. Every time the young candidate put on that old shaker, she struck a deadly blow at pride; and by the end of her postulate she should have been far advanced along the road to humility.

However, let not our postulant of the dainty cap and turban despair, because of the passing of the shaker. There are a thousand-and-one other helps to acquire humility; and if she be but in earnest, she will not be left behind in the race for holy humility, — she, too, will reach the goal.

CHAPTER XII

Letters to Novices

THE following letter was written by Mother Clotilda to two of her novices who were on missions:

J.M.J.A.T.
Convent I.H.M., Monroe
April 8, 1885

My very dear Sisters Philomena and Domitilla,

Your very kind and welcome letters were received in due time. Many, many thanks for them, and for your generous promise of prayers. Indeed, my dear Sisters, I fully appreciate all, and will not forget your kindness when you are in need. I was glad to hear that you had both written to our dear Father; he seemed much pleased over your letters; said he was going to answer them and send you each a picture.

Now, my dear little novices, I want to remind you both that the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus will, this year, be on June twelfth; and I should like you to make a preparation of forty days previous to it; so commence on the third of May, and leave nothing undone, to prove yourselves truly generous to that Divine Heart. Ask

that Heart to teach you what to do in order to prepare yourselves in such a manner that you will receive all the graces His loving Heart has had in store for you from all Eternity, if you but ask for them. He says, "Ask and you shall receive." Be wise, dear Sisters; be faithful to inspirations from God, let obedience be ever your guide. Be as firm as a rock in acting, not from feeling, but from principle; let no opportunity of practising humility pass without improving it; and be truly mortified, because without mortification, you can never attain sanctity. Love and cherish your Rule; try with all your hearts not to violate it in the smallest point; and in doing this God will bless your work. Try to grow each day in love for Mary Immaculate; make as many acts as you can from now 'till the twelfth of June, and put my intentions in with your own. Now, like two dear Sisters, do all I have told you, and may God bless you.

The novices would be delighted to get a letter from you; so if you are not too busy, try to write them soon. Sisters Margaret and Wilhelmina are not at all well, but are up and around. I hope, if God wills it, they will soon be better. All send oceans of love to you and wish so much for a letter. We have little news to tell you as we are about the same as ever. There are three postulants.

Mother's health has not been good for some time, but she is now somewhat better. Father is well and may see you before you get this letter; as I heard him say last evening that he expected to go to Detroit. We are all very busy preparing for our Blessed Mother's month; so don't let any novice at home get ahead of you.

Now, locking you both in the Sacred Heart, and begging you to ask much, much for poor me and mine; and promising not to forget you, I am

Yours in Jesus' Sacred Heart,
Sister M. Clotilda, S.M.

The following was written to a novice who was sent to a small country mission where there were only three or four Sisters. This novice had been born and raised in the city of Detroit; she found the country lonely.

J.M.J.A.T.
Convent I.H.M.
September 12, 1883

My very dear little Sister,

Your kind letter gave me much pleasure, and I trust that, ere this, you are over your loneliness. You know, dear Sister, "Life is as we make it," if we are truly generous at all times, we shall come out all right and secure. Now, my dear Sister, as the novices have told you all the news, I will tell you one little secret of the novitiate. To-

night, (Friday, Sept. 12) we shall commence a novena for the beautiful feast of the Seven Dolors; and we will try to be generous towards our absent sisters. Do you also try to get grand things from our Blessed Lady; try to honor her sorrows by giving her all the "acts" you can; then see how happy you will be! Often think of St. Margaret Mary's maxim: It was enough for her to know that she would not like to do a certain thing, to make her go and do it. I would ask you, dear Sister, in a special manner, to imitate her in that holy disposition.

Be very, very simple with Superiors, and make use of every opportunity of dying to self-will and self-love, the two mortal enemies of religious; and sometimes think of what the saints say, "a heart to love and a body to suffer." Have very great courage and love, and make good use of the time that remains. Love from all in the novitiate. Try to get me something from Mary Immaculate which I want very, very much.

Yours devotedly,

Sister M. Clotilda, S.M.

CHAPTER XIII

Impressions Made on Passing Acquaintances

AS we have seen in Chapter IV, when Mother Clotilda completed a term of six years in the Novitiate she was, by the election of '85, again placed at the head of the Community as General Superior.

Spiritual writers tell us that not all God's saints are hidden; that some — a few comparatively speaking — are destined to shine in this life as well as in Eternity. They are placed as beacon lights on an eminence to illumine, as it were, by their resplendent shining, the "straight and narrow way"; to attract thither souls, who, with spiritual vision less clear than their own, stand more in danger of straying from the "narrow path" into flowery by-ways. Like stars of the first magnitude these chosen souls attract the attention of all observers and by their wonderful brilliancy help to make virtue amiable and desirable, and so draw souls to God's love. Such was our saintly Mother.

Even strangers who had only a passing acquaintance with her, were impressed by her exceptional worth; and they not infrequently gave

expression to their sentiments. On a certain occasion, a gentleman in passing a group of Sisters, accosted them in the following words:

"I wonder if you, Sisters, realize what a wonderful woman that Superior of yours is!"

We are here reminded of a visit paid St. Mary's in the late '70's by a gifted young Jesuit. At that time he had probably reached the zenith of his success and popularity. He came on a Friday afternoon; gave us a beautiful conference in our chapel at four o'clock; and spent the evening and the following morning with us.

While the conference was appreciated for its spiritual content, his manner of delivery simply charmed his audience. We learned during the evening visit that he had taken instructions in public speaking under James E. Murdoch, the most famous public reader of his day.

Our Sisters who were engaged in this line of work saw their opportunity. They succeeded in persuading our Reverend guest to recite, on the following morning, a number of difficult and beautiful selections. He was most generous and gave much valuable assistance; for which, ever after, the Sisters remembered him with gratitude. His graceful and kindly charity was never forgotten; and years later when we heard, with sorrow, of his demise, many a heart echoed that beautiful prayer of holy Church: "Eternal rest

grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace!"

Now, for the connection between the above incident and this biographical sketch. He was not slow in discerning that our dear Mother was a woman of rare virtue and merit, and he delighted us by the warm words of praise he bestowed on her. He was particularly impressed by her deep humility. From among his many encomiums we shall select just one to record:

"You would never know that she is the Superior; she is so simple and unassuming."

We shall here subjoin a few letters, written, for the most part, when she was Superior of St. Vincent's. Let us listen while our dear Mother speaks to us from these pages, in words that glow with love for God and neighbor. How deep her words of sisterly love sink into heart and soul as we read! Cheerful resignation, love for God's most holy will, and ardent longings for sanctity illuminate every page. It is greatly to be regretted that, of our saintly Mother's letters, so few have been preserved.

Although only twelve years have elapsed since her holy death, there are many among the younger members of the Community who never saw or knew her.

The main object of these pages, then, is to make this great woman known to such; and to

cause her holy life and example to continue among us; ever urging us, with words and deeds of burning fervor, onward and upward in the path of perfection, until we, her Sisters whom she loved and still loves deeply, shall reach the goal which she has won.

CHAPTER XIV

Letters

THE following letters were written to a Sister who had, for many years (about twelve) been on St. Vincent's mission, and had now been sent to St. Stephen's, Port Huron.

J.M.J.A.T.

St. Vincent's Convent, Detroit
August 28, 1910

My own loved Sister B.,

I really cannot tell you how lonely we feel without you. I miss you on every side; but my loss is Sister Marie's gain; if you keep well you will be such a help to her in the house.

Your letter made me very happy, as it contained the true spirit of a good religious, — perfect resignation to God's blessed will; no matter what comes to us, God's will is all we want.

On our return we found many improvements: The house is all lighted by electricity — a light in every cell. — We have a beautiful bathroom in Sister Raphael's old room; all the radiators are bronzed and all is fine. The Reverend Father Doherty minds your change very much. I never saw him mind any change so much before, except

the two you know about; but he is really very, very kind and good to all.

We have a great amount of work to be done in the school buildings before school opens. Mrs. Hines will come back. The men came for the windows and did them beautifully; we have had women at work ever since our return, and are not nearly done yet. We have had a very good girl to help Sister Raphael, if she will only stay. Miss Mythen told me that she saw you. Now, I have told you all the news in a nutshell. Sister Raphael wants me to say nice things to you for her, — she is so good and loves you dearly.

All the Sisters will write you as soon as they get time to breathe. Be brave and very noble. — Give kindest love to dear Sisters Euphrasia, Marie, Bernadine, and to each and all from

Your loving and grateful Sister at St. Vincent's,

Sister M. Clotilda, S.M.

(To the same)

J.M.J.A.T.

St. Vincent's Convent, Detroit
September 15, 1910

My own dear Sister B.,

Your most welcome, newsy letter came in good time and made us really lonesome. Since I wrote you last, I have been very ill — so ill that I thought my time had come; fever 103½; in bed

for two weeks; but am now about well — only very weak. . . . The schools are all well filled; Sister Alphonsa has sixty-three; Sister Pauline sixty; Sister Ida sixty-one; Miss Mythen eighty-four. You can judge from these numbers that the school is not going down.

Mother and Sister Domitilla called yesterday. . . . How are you? Well, I hope. When you write next, tell dear Sister Bernardine to drop me a line telling me how her poor arm is; but do not put yourself out to write. I want to hear from your dear old self whether you are really and truly happy. To hear that you are will make me very happy.

The Sisters will write as soon as they can get the time. Tell dear Sisters Euphrasia, Bernardine, and Ildefonse that they must keep well and strong. . . . I have you all in my prayers and will keep you there.

God love and bless my Sister B.

Your own

Sister M. CLOTILDA

(To the same)

J.M.J.A.T.

ST. VINCENT'S CONVENT, DETROIT
November 27, 1910

My dear, dear Sister B.,

Your lovely letter was most joyfully received and treasured by all at St. Vincent's. I am so glad

THE PRESENT CONVENT (*front entrance*)

that you enjoyed the D.B. as the dear kind Sisters took so much pains to get it off. I feel now that they are fully repaid as all they wanted was to give you pleasure.

Yes; I am well, well; better than I was last year. I think the fall made me well. Now, I have told you the truth; so be easy. Write only when you really want to write, as I well know what a task it is for you.

Give much love to Sisters Euphrasia, Bernardine, Ildefonse, and Marie, and all at St. Stephen's. Tell dear Sister Bernardine I am so glad to hear that her arm is well. It is not likely that I shall write again before the 8th; let me wish you all a most glorious feast of our own loved Immaculate Mother. I hope she will get many, many favors for all of you. . . . Please do not forget us in your novena for the Eighth. You will be in ours. Good-bye. I put you down deep in Jesus' Sacred Heart.

Your own loving,
Sister M. Clotilda
Servant of Mary

(To the same)

J.M.J.A.T.

St. Vincent's Convent, Detroit
December, 1910

My own dear, dear Sister B.,

A happy, holy, thrice blessed Christmas! May your dear heart be filled to overflowing with love

for the dear Infant Jesus! I am sure you will have a most beautiful Christmas with all those dear Sisters at St. Stephen's.

You will remember that you and I agreed not to have any entertainment this year. Only the C. of M. and the Sodality will have one each; and oh, the work it saves! . . . O my dear Sister, let you and me try to be big saints; if we do not, we are foolish, as that is all that is worth living for in this world.

Poor Nora suffers very much of late; you must pray for her. Please tell the dear Sisters each and all, that I send them all the love that this letter can carry, and wish all a happy Christmas from me and all here. Miss Mythen told us that you were not well. I do hope that this letter and the little Infant's visit will find you your old self. It seems to me from what I hear that you are doing fine work in Port Huron; you are a true missionary.

We miss you here oh! so much! particularly your old friend, Sister Clotilda. I have often had the thought to call you to do some act of charity for the sick, only to find you are not at hand, and so make the best of it. O, Sister, how grand our vocation is! We are at home wherever we find Sisters of the I.H.M. No matter where we are, we are ever and always happy, because we know we are just where God wants us to be.

Sister Benedicta is as droll as ever; many a

good laugh she gives us. . . . We have a pretty pedestal for our Blessed Mother in the lower corridor; so the statue of our loved Immaculate Mother is no longer on the table; I am sure you are glad. . . . Miss Mythen has nearly ninety little ones enrolled.

Now, I must stop. I wish all at St. Stephen's a most holy, and happy Christmas from each dear Sister here.

Your own
Sister M. Clotilda, S.M.

J.M.J.A.T.

St. Vincent's Convent, Detroit
May 9, 1911

My own dear Sister B.,

How long it seems since I said a word to you! but oh! how often I have thought of you and all at St. Stephen's! How is dear Sister Euphrasia? Be sure to give her a big heart full of love from me and all here.

I am sure you are trying very hard to make your children love our dear Blessed Mother. Do not let anyone surpass you in this, as you know so well how to do it. . . .

Are you not glad vacation is near? I am most anxious to see you. Try to keep well. You will, I know, put me in your May intentions. Reverend Father Doherty is well and active as ever. He is going to sell his grand coach and horses, and

buy an auto instead. . . . O, dear Sister, let us try to be great big, big saints; as that is all that is good for aught.

Good-bye and pray for

Sister M. Clotilda, S.M.

(On the occasion of a Sister's death)

J.M.J.A.T.

St. Vincent's Convent, Detroit.
September 28, 1911

My own dear, dear Sister E.,

How well I know how you will feel when the sad news of poor, good Nelly's death reaches you! How my heart bleeds for all of you. . . .You are all so united, so loving; but God knows best; and loves each one infinitely more than anyone else can. Let us go to Him with full confidence that He will comfort each sorrowful heart, and be all, all to the dear family left motherless. Oh! how I wish I could say words of comfort to you; but I know how much you love God and His holy will; and you will be a lovely brave little Sister — one that will delight the heart of God by her beautiful resignation and love.

You know that you have our poor prayers as well as those of our children in school. Poor Mrs. Brennan! my heart aches for her and for all of you, it is so hard for all concerned.

As I want this to go now, I shall say only this

one word more. Be generous and courageous and all will be well. Good-bye.

Your own

Sister M. Clotilda

The following letter was written on the occasion of a Sister's Silver Jubilee. The Jubilarian at the time was one of the Sisters of St. Vincent's Mission.

J.M.J.A.T.

St. Vincent's Convent, Detroit
November 3, 1910

My own dear, dear Sister,

We, the Sisters of St. Vincent's mission, come to you with hearts overflowing with love and gratitude for all your dear sisterly acts of true kindness to us during all these long years of mission life. Yes, dearest Sister, we come to congratulate you a thousand and a thousand times on the joyful day of your Silver Jubilee; and we will beg the adorable Heart of Jesus to load you with all the choice graces of His own Divine Heart; and may He deign to leave you with us to celebrate your Golden, yes, your Diamond Jubilee; and may each year of the cycle bring you nearer and dearer to His loving Heart.

We hardly need to tell you here, how very, very much we appreciate all your dear loving kindnesses to each one of your companions; if you could but see down into our hearts, you would

understand better than our words can tell you, our gratitude and love for you, our own dear Sister.

Enclosed find a dollar to get a Mass said for yourself any time you wish; and that you may have the happiest, grandest feast you have ever yet spent is the fond wish of your dear loving Sisters of St. Vincent's mission.

per Sister M. CLOTILDA, S.M.

A Sister of St. Vincent's mission was threatened with total loss of hearing. The doctors left her no hope. Mother Clotilda's kind heart prompted her to write the following letter in our Blessed Mother's name:

HEAVEN, *October* 14, 1903

To my dear child, Sister P.,

I have come down from Heaven to bring you a message from my Divine Son. He sends me to tell you not to worry about your hearing, as He has arranged all for the best, which you will live to see; and that in good time all will be well with you and your two little "ears." I also come to tell you that I and my Divine Son are very much pleased with all that you are doing to spread devotion to me under the title of "Lady of Victory"; and for every tiny act you perform in our honor, you will be amply repaid even in this mor-

tal life; and when you die, I will come and take you home with me. Now I will bless you.

Your own
IMMACULATE MOTHER MARY

(Sister recovered her hearing and attributes her recovery to the holy prayers of her saintly Superior.)

J.M.J.A.T.

ST. VINCENT'S CONVENT, DETROIT
October 26, '99

My own dear Sister I.,

Is it possible that your Silver Jubilee is here! Yes, it is indeed true that twenty-five long years have passed since the day that you gave yourself to God's dear service and love. How short, in one way, it seems, and how long in another way! No one knows this better than yourself, Sister; is it not true?

We all come to wish you a thrice happy and glorious feast on the thirtieth. Yes, my own dear Sister, may it be a day replete with all God's best gifts to your own dear self is the heartfelt wish of each and every one of St. Vincent's Sisters and I venture to say of every Sister in the Community.

You have many, many reasons to rejoice with us that you have lived to see this day! Don't you, dear Sister, think so? Many and many a beautiful pearl you have put into the Casket of the Sacred Heart by your noble acts of charity and

love for your Sisters in the Convent. Never will I forget your kindness to me, particularly when my arm was hurt. You never will know how much I appreciated your true sisterly charity and kindness. May you ever and always receive the same true charity yourself from all with whom you will come in contact. May God just shower down on you His most special blessings and may you become one of God's most favored souls will ever be the wish and prayer of your loving and grateful Sister in Mary's love.

Sister M. CLOTILDA,
Servant of Mary

J.M.J.A.T.

ST. VINCENT'S CONVENT, DETROIT
September 29, 1909

My own dear Sister A.,

Your postal containing the sad news of your dear sister's death came to us today; and you have my heartfelt sympathy and all the prayers of each dear Sister. Yes, I do know what it means to your tender loving heart; but only think of her happiness and you will be consoled! She was so truly good that you have a world of consolation in her beautiful life . . . so, like a dear child, cheer up and be truly brave; I know you will, and in that way help her more by your resignation than in any other way.

I hope you are well and have a full class, and

find them as good as you always do. How is our dear Sister H.? We received a long letter from her some time ago and I commenced to answer it but got only a little way; and there it still lies waiting to be finished, soon I hope.

Now, my own dear Sister, with a hearty promise of getting you prayers for your loved one, and giving you the united prayers and sympathy of all our dear Sisters, I am, in Mary's Immaculate Heart,

Your ever loving,
Sister M. CLOTILDA
Servant of Mary

The following letter was written in thanks for a box of Agnus Deis sent her for the third of June, feast of St. Clotilda. For some reason the Sisters did not celebrate her feast that year until the ninth of June.

J.M.J.A.T.

ST. VINCENT'S CONVENT, DETROIT
June 12, 1903

My very dear Sister X.,

What a grand surprise you gave me, no words can tell! What must you think of me for not acknowledging your beautiful gift until this late day! I did not receive it until the ninth; so that is why my letter was so slow in coming to you. I cannot tell you how much I prize those beautiful Agnus Deis, although, as you may guess, they

made me feel lonely. . . . Thank you a thousand times, and may each stitch you put into them be a beautiful gem in your crown for all Eternity. . . . I often think of you and pray for you, too, and I feel you do the same for me. Next Friday will be the feast of the adorable Heart of Jesus and you will have "Exposition" all day. Now, coax our God for my intention and I will do the same for you.

I will enclose in this letter to you, a little picture of the Sacred Heart. I think the dear face is so devotional. I want you to keep it in your prayer-book where you can often tell Him you love Him and do all for His alone. Yes, my own darling Sister, love Him, if possible, more than anyone else; as you know, your heart is very big; give every throb of it to Him, and Him alone. Work hard, and I will, too, and let us see which will come out ahead!

Now, I will leave you deep down in that Divine Heart, and ever remain

Your loving and devoted,
Sister M. CLOTILDA, *Servant of Mary*

J.M.J.A.T.

ST. VINCENT'S CONVENT, DETROIT
December 23, '95

My own dear, dear Sister X.,

This note is all alone for you. Let me wish you from the very depths of my heart a most joyous

Christmas and a happy, happy New Year. May you, each step you take, put a new jewel in your crown that you will wear for all Eternity.

Are you going to come to see me during the Christmas vacation? We are free from now till January sixth. How have you been all year? I so often think of you, and, O my own dear Sister, how lovely it will be when you and I are safe with God. . . . I will give you a big share in my Holy Communion on Christmas morning and you remember my dear sister, Mrs. O'Rafferty, who died November thirtieth. I know you will. Now do not mind writing to me as I know your heart and how good you will be to her poor soul.

May the dear Infant God fill your big heart up to the brim with joy and love, and make you one of the biggest saints in Heaven is the fond wish of

Your own loving and grateful Sister in Jesus,

Sister M. Clotilda, S.M.

J.M.J.A.T.

Convent of the I.H.M., Monroe
September 24, 1872

*My dear ones at home, not forgetting Nellie,**

Do you not think it is time that I should answer your letters? I must not forget to tell you,

* The Nellie of these letters was Nellie Palmer, Mother Clotilda's half-sister. Nellie's granddaughter is Sister Mary Clotilda, who will make her final vows on August fifteenth, 1927, as a Sister Servant of the I.H.M.

however, that I did not receive the letter you wrote me from Detroit after you had left. I received only the two written from dear old home, in which you asked for your music, etc. We expressed the articles to Dexter and trust that you have received them.

You know that my time is so taken up that I cannot write just when I wish. How are you all? I was much pleased with the few words dear, dear mama sent me in Nellie's letter. O, dear mama, often write me a few lines, will you? I should prize them so highly, as they come from my dear Mother.

Are you all very happy and good? Johnie does not write as often as he used to. I *guess* he is getting *old* and *grey;* even if you are, put on spectacles and write me sometimes. Tell me about yourself, Chandos,* Bennie and all. Lately I have been getting so many prayers said for dear Chandos' conversion that I hope soon to hear that he is a Catholic. Do you think that I shall ever hear that good news? Please make him come to see me the next time he is home.

* Her brother Chandos was baptized in infancy but has never been a practical Catholic. Although about ninety years of age, he is still living. It seems as if our patient Lord is waiting for this stray sheep to obey His loving call and return to the true fold. We cannot think that the prayers and tears of his saintly sister will fail to obtain for this loved brother what they have so often obtained for others.

Nellie, I have no particular news to tell you; school is going on as usual; nearly all the pupils (boarders) this year are new; only a few of the old ones are back. Minnie Beach has not yet returned. Ella Eagan, Hattie La Croix and her little sister are here, and about twelve or fourteen of the other old girls, — all the rest are strangers.

Are you not going to send us some pupils? You must try to do so. When will Emma come to school? I wish she could come at once. Now, dear Emma, don't be lazy but hurry up and come as soon as you can.

Mama, did you find little Nellie a good girl when she went home or did you find her bad?

My own dearest ones, all and each, not forgetting Mollie and the darling little ones, a fond and most affectionate good-bye. Let me ask you all to pray for

Your devoted
Sister M. Clotilda, S.M.

P.S. — Nellie, Sister Veronica has gone on mission and Sister Godelieve is in her place as directress of the pupils.

J.M.J.A.T.

St. Vincent's Convent, Detroit
January 27, 1906

My own dear Chandos and Alice,

I have thought of you so often since your lovely visit. I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed it,

and how happy it made me to see you both so good and kind.

I am sending you and Alice a little gold medal of our Blessed Mother and you can wear them on your watch-guards; also a sweet little picture of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to keep in your prayer-books. I love to look on His dear face; it does me good, and makes me wish to be kind to every one in imitation of His kindness to us poor sinners.

How delighted I am to hear so good news of our dear Will! We will keep right on praying for him till we hear that he is his old self again. . . . And my own darling Chandos and Alice, you must try to be able to bring me *good grand* news about yourselves before very, very long. I'll keep on begging God to bless both of you and make you very *rich* in *Heavenly* riches. Do not care too much for making money which perishes with the few fleeting years we have to spend here on earth; rather let us be wise and store up heavenly riches which will last for all eternity.

Since I saw you, I have learned to love you so dearly, just as if you were my own darling brother and sister, and in truth, such you are to me.

Alice, be sure not to work too hard, but keep well and live to make Chandos very happy; also be good to dear Carrie and comfort her. Do not let one day pass without thanking God for all He has

done and is still doing for both of you. Think what a grand happy day it will be for you and me, when you both receive our loving God in Holy Communion for the first time! Only think of it; it makes my very heart leap with joy!

Your own loving
Sister M. Clotilda, S.M.

J.M.J.A.T.

St. Mary's, Monroe
(Dictated) *July* 19, 1914

My dear Nephew Chandos,

Feeling myself very near the verge of the grave, — it may be in a few days, and it may not be even one day, — my thoughts go out to you as they do to my dear brother, Chandos, after whom you are named; because of all my dear ones, I feel that you and he are the only members of the family not walking in the light of our holy faith. Not that I think, dear Chandos, that you are wholly without religion, but having never made your first Holy Communion, nor having been confirmed, you have not had the proper instructions and consequently have not the grace which the other members of the family have had and still have.

I have prayed very much for you and even now when I feel the weakness of death upon me, and know that the shadows are closing about me, you,

dear Nephew, are in my heart and mind. I am begging God to give you His grace and His love, to draw you to Himself, to enlighten you in the truths of our holy religion, and to bless and love you in time and eternity.

Promise me, dear Chandos, that, when I am gone, you will come into the Church. Go to some priest. I should like you to go to one of the Jesuit Fathers on Jefferson Avenue and tell him that you desire to be instructed in the faith, — and you will see what happiness will come to your soul, — what blessings upon your whole future life, — and finally what peace and joy in the long eternity in Heaven where I hope one day to meet you.

To my last breath I will ask this for you; and if I have any power with God, I will ask it when I go to Him in Heaven.

May our dear good God bless you, and may the dear Sacred Heart of Jesus draw you to Himself. Pray for me, — and again an affectionate, prayerful good-bye from

Your loving Aunt,

Sister M. Clotilda, S.M.

(*per Sister M. Loyola*)

(The reader will be glad to know that our saintly Mother's prayers for this nephew were answered. He died a Catholic three years later.)

J.M.J.A.T.

MONROE, MICHIGAN
June 30, 1898

My own darling Nephew,

In a few more days you will be ordained a priest of God. Oh, how my heart leaps with joy! the yearnings of a life are fulfilled. You will be a son of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, another Christ. I will be with you on that happy day. I have not ceased and I will not cease to pray for you and put you in all my good works. When I see you take your oath of obedience and reverence to dear old Bishop Foley, I will pray that you never forget your duty to him and his successors. I wish you to go into your grave a true loyal son to every Bishop of the Diocese, under whom you will labor. You have had for your models saintly men, dear Monsignor Joos, Father Buysse, and your dear friend, Reverend Joseph Joos.

I rejoice because you will undo much of the harm of my dear father and his relatives. You know how I loved him and what an influence he had over my early life, and I am sure you will pray for him and say Masses for his soul and those that are near and dear to me. You have in your blood all the pride of the O'Toole's and also their faith. Your dear grandmother and my mother had many struggles to bring us up Catholics, and I am sure she is waiting for you to bring

her Holy Communion after you offer your first High Mass in Jackson.

I am so happy to know that you are going to say your first Mass in our chapel where I can receive our dear Lord from your hands, and feel the dew of His precious Blood falling upon me. These few lines will reach you while in retreat, but I want you to know that I am with you and will be with you on Sunday morning, July third, to see the crowning glory of my life fulfilled.

Your devoted Aunt,

Sister M. Clotilda, S.M.

CHAPTER XV

Mother Clotilda, Local Superior of St. Vincent's 1894–1912

AS we have already seen, Mother Clotilda, in 1894, was appointed Superior of St. Vincent's, Detroit. For over twenty-five years, the Mother House had been the scene of her labors. Here she had made her novitiate, — those blessed days, each of which was marked by some new favor from Heaven; some precious grace by which self-conquest became sweeter and easier; rapid progress was made in the way of perfection; and a corresponding growth in God's holy love. The Mother House was consequently endeared to her by the most tender associations that can cling to the human heart. And hers was such a great loving heart, that it must have suffered keenly, when by holy obedience she was transferred to new fields of labor; for our dear Mother was very human as well as very holy. Her noble heart, however, was as generous as it was loving; and this sacrifice was offered to God with all the completeness and generosity of soul, of which the human heart, aided by grace, is capable.

As Superior of St. Vincent's, our zealous Mother had a wide field in which to work for God's glory; to bring back to His love souls who had grown indifferent or cold; and last but not least, of spreading devotion to His Sacred Heart; and she utilized to the utmost her opportunities. Her zeal embraced all.

It was a "red-letter" day for any of the little ones who chanced to meet our gracious Mother in one of the corridors of the school. She smiled, patted the little head, and said a few kind words, which so filled the child's heart with joy that she must needs whisper it in the ear of her teacher before resuming her seat in school.

It was occasionally found necessary to send a boy to her for correction. He invariably returned after a few minutes, looking bright and happy, triumphantly holding in his hand a small statue of the Sacred Heart, of our Blessed Lady, or of St. Joseph. This statue was given to him as a reminder of his promise of future good behavior. To his worried and overtaxed teacher this, no doubt, seemed like putting a premium on bad conduct. But, eventually, many of those troublesome boys proved that they had not been deaf to the good instructions received; and their teachers who had so patiently borne with them had the supreme consolation of seeing them grow into noble manhood — a credit to their Catholic

school, and useful members of society. It not seldom happens that these troublesome lads, when they reach manhood, are the best friends the Sisters have; ready at all times to render a service, and often at great inconvenience to themselves.

Our saintly Mother was never tired of exhorting the Sisters to be patient and kind, especially with troublesome boys. "We cannot," she would say, "make a child virtuous by force. Only the grace of God can change the heart. When a soul is turned in the right direction, it is the grace of God that does it; so pray fervently and rely upon God's grace to give efficacy to your words; offer little acts of self-denial for this same end; wait for God's grace and be patient. Always remember that we produce fruit in souls only in proportion to our own holiness of life; hence strive daily to become perfect religious."

Mother Clotilda had the requisites of a true apostle, — personal faith and personal love, — and her words sank deep into the hearts of Christ's little ones. It was her custom to go into the schools before the great Feasts of the Church to aid the teacher in preparing her class for the proper celebration of the Feast. She usually told them an appropriate and touching story, which so charmed them, that it was remembered and afterwards related, — always with the added information

that "Mother Clotilda told us that story in the Second Grade," (or the First or the Third as the case might be). As it is not so much what the teacher says, as what she is, that counts in the moral and religious training of the child, only God knows the untold good wrought in souls by our saintly Mother.

When Mother Clotilda first went to St. Vincent's, she found the people quite indifferent with regard to the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. They went to Mass, it is true, because it was a holy day of obligation; but there were no Holy Communions, no special demonstrations in honor of our Blessed Lady. Our good Mother went to work at once, beginning with the school children. She instructed the Sisters to do all in their power to give them devotion to that great Feast, and to induce them to receive Holy Communion on that day in our Blessed Lady's honor. The practice of going to Holy Communion, beginning with the children, little by little extended to older members of the family including parents; so that there were hundreds of Communions on the Eighth of December, where a few years before there had been none.

On a certain occasion the General Superior wished to place Mother Clotilda at the head of another Detroit Mission where it was thought that she was more needed. Monsignor Doherty

objected, saying: "You may take any Sister on the mission, except Mother Clotilda. She brings a blessing on my parish and the school and I cannot consent to her removal."

If we recall the extraordinary number of vocations to the religious state, among the girls; and to the holy priesthood among the boys, during the eighteen years that Mother Clotilda was Superior and Guardian Angel of St. Vincent's, we cannot but feel that there were strong and unusual influences at work; and we do not blame Monsignor Doherty for his unwillingness to have her taken from his school.

Mother Clotilda's zeal was not restricted to those of her own faith; it reached out to non-Catholics wherever there was an opportunity of doing good, even if she could do no more than remove prejudice. We shall cite just one example:

A few days before she left St. Vincent's for the last time, she sent a beautiful picture of the Sacred Heart to a business man of the city, with whom the Sisters occasionally had dealings. He was not a Catholic; but he had always shown such marked courtesy to the Sisters that our dear Mother wished to express her appreciation before leaving the city. When next the Sisters called at his store, he began, at once, to speak of Mother Clotilda. He told the Sisters how much he prized her beautiful gift; and said, moreover, that while

he lived, it should never leave his home. "I cannot explain why," he said, "but I have never talked to that woman that I did not feel in the presence of a person who seemed to belong to another world." Later, he visited her in Monroe after she had gone home to die. It chanced to be the last time she was able to go to the parlor.

In Mother Clotilda's day, St. Vincent's was probably the best equipped parochial school in the city. It was the pride of Monsignor Doherty's heart, and with good reason. But because of the large number of children, the work, especially in the primary and the grammar grades, was very heavy. This called out all the tender sympathy of Mother Clotilda's loving heart. She strove to encourage these hard-working Sisters by such words as, "I realize, dear Sisters, that your work is very hard, but when you call to mind that you are working for One Who is so liberal in rewarding, how sweet your work ought to be. Let this thought encourage you in all difficulties and hardships. You will labor for a few short years and then will come the reward. Remember that 'they that instruct many unto justice shall shine as stars for all Eternity.'"

CHAPTER XVI

Her Health Seriously Threatened — Consults Doctor Obermiller of Cleveland — Goes to Lebanon — Returns to Loraine Cured — Goes on Duty

WE now come to a page in our loved Mother's biography, which is painful to write. A dark and threatening cloud had risen above the evening horizon of Life's long and beautiful day; in 1907 a malignant tumor made its appearance; and when this cruel fact became known to the Sisters, the only heart in the Community not pierced with grief was her own. Our saintly Mother saw in this affliction only the holy will of God, — the God to Whose love she had been devoted throughout a long and holy life; she thus remained calm and serene, entirely submissive to God's loving designs in her regard.

I cannot forbear quoting a few words from a little book, "Workings of the Divine Will," which for years had been her "vade mecum"; because they express more perfectly than can words of mine, our dear Mother's attitude toward all the events of this life whether pleasing or painful to poor human nature.

"The soul which sees the will of God, even in the smallest things and in the most afflicting trials, receives them all with joy, jubilation, and respect; and she arises and meets with honor and welcome, what others flee from with fear and dismay."

In the summer vacation of 1907, Mother Clotilda consulted Doctor Obermiller of Cleveland, who was reputed very successful in treating cases such as hers. The doctor assured our dear Mother that she could cure her. In order to be near Doctor Obermiller, Mother Clotilda was removed from St. Vincent's for the time being, and in September was sent to Loraine, Ohio, where we had recently established a school. After she had gone to Doctor Obermiller several weeks and the doctor still deferred giving the treatment, our Mother said to her, "Doctor, do not hesitate to tell me the truth about my case; tell me exactly what you think. I am entirely indifferent as to life or death. I wish only for God's holy will."

The doctor, electrified by these words, put aside all hesitancy and replied at once, with the utmost sincerity: "I can do nothing for you; your case is hopeless."

When our dear afflicted Mother heard this decision, not the slightest change was observable in her serene and cheerful countenance. She thanked

the doctor as warmly as if she were leaving her office a cured, rather than a doomed woman.

Notwithstanding Doctor Obermiller's adverse decision, and the fact that our Mother's condition daily grew worse, her Sisters would not give up hope. Prayers were multiplied throughout the Community, and on the Feast of our Lady's Immaculate Conception, Superiors decided to have her consult Doctor Curry of Lebanon, Ohio, who conducted a hospital for the relief of cancer patients. After some correspondence, it was finally decided that she should go to Lebanon to take this treatment. Our dear saintly Mother never gave the slightest intimation of any wish in the matter, but left herself entirely in the hands of her Superiors. Sister Brigid, the local Superior of our Loraine school, accompanied her to Lebanon, remaining with her until the opening of school after the Christmas holidays. They arrived at the hospital December twenty-third, and Mother Clotilda took her first treatment on Christmas Eve.

Her Sisters throughout the Community, and especially those at St. Vincent's, did all in their power to brighten those days of exile and suffering; she was literally showered with mail on Christmas Day and during her stay at the hospital. It was in this time of suffering that our loved Mother realized as she had never done

before, how dear she was to every Sister of the Immaculate Heart.

While Mother Clotilda was undergoing this painful treatment, she gave no outward sign of suffering or anxiety; but ever preserved her habitual cheerfulness, — her joyful serenity of countenance. Doctor and nurses, all non-Catholics, marvelled; they could not understand. The sublime faith which enabled her to see in every event, the loving hand of an All-wise God, was hidden from their eyes; therefore, as the days came and went they continued to marvel, and admire, and fail to understand.

Our saintly Mother, always a true Apostle, determined not to lose this opportunity of doing good, of making God known and loved. She sowed the good seed, by word and example; whether it took root, sprang up, and bore fruit is God's secret. In the hospital were victims of cancer in all stages of progress. If our dear zealous Mother could do no more, she said at least a kind and encouraging word whenever an opportunity presented itself. She often spoke to Doctor Curry of the love and goodness of God; and, as usual, gave him a Sacred Heart badge which he promised to wear. He greatly admired our saintly Mother; and thought her a wonderful woman. After her return home, he wrote and sent a photograph of his pretty little daughter, on which was inscribed,

The Right Reverend C. P. MAES

"My best love." Mother Clotilda, in return, sent him a beautiful picture of the Sacred Heart, bearing the inscription, "This is my best and only love."

We are glad to have this opportunity to make public acknowledgment of the great kindness of her brother-in-law, the late Mr. Morrissey of Houston, Texas. Her dear Eddie, as she familiarly called him, paid all her expenses at the hospital; he frequently wrote her beautiful letters; and had he been her own brother, he could not have done more.

We should be most ungrateful, did we fail to put on record a visit which she received from the late Right Reverend Camillus Paul Maes, Bishop of Covington, Kentucky. He had been a lifelong friend of the Community and a great admirer of our wonderful Mother for her many virtues, and amiable qualities of heart and soul. As soon as he heard that she was at this hospital, he determined to visit her. If we reflect for a moment that our dear Mother was alone, — among strangers and in a strange land, — we shall realize, at least faintly, what such a visit would mean to her. It must have been as welcome as an oasis, to the weary and thirsty traveler in a desert.

Not that these people with whom, for the time being, her lot was cast, were at all lacking in kindness; on the contrary, they were most careful of

her comfort. Doctor Curry and the nurses were attentive and kind; but our dear Mother had lived too long among her blue-robed Sisters not to miss them sadly now that, for a time, she was separated from them; she could hardly feel otherwise than as a stranger in a strange land; hence the good Bishop's visit must have been a source of much spiritual consolation and comfort in her exile.

He, too, like herself is, we trust, enjoying the reward of a long and holy life spent in God's service. Mr. Morrissey, her dear Eddie, mentioned above, entered upon his eternity less than a year ago. May they rest in peace.

After Mother Clotilda had taken Doctor Curry's treatment one month, she was pronounced cured; and returned to Loraine where she remained until the end of the scholastic year. She chanced to know that in a Detroit school there was a Sister in need of medical attention; but as the General Superior had no one to replace her, she would be obliged to wait and work on until the summer vacation before she could receive the necessary medical assistance.

Our generous Mother at once offered to take the place of a Sister in one of the Loraine classes thereby setting free a strong young Sister to go to Detroit. The General Superior would not, at first,

listen to such a proposal; but Mother Clotilda represented herself as entirely able to go on duty; and finally succeeded in persuading Mother Mechtildis to make the proposed change.

There were many reasons why the General Superior would be reluctant to place Mother Clotilda in school. To mention only a few: Her religious life, as we have seen, had been occupied with duties almost wholly administrative. It was over forty years since she had stood in a schoolroom as a teacher. After this long interval, she must have felt strangely out of touch with the work of teaching little fifth grade boys and girls the elements of English, numbers, etc. Then her weakened condition, after so many months of suffering, would emphasize the difficulty; but it had always been a characteristic trait of our generous Mother to forget self and think only of the needs of others; and so under circumstances that would have freely excused her from offering herself for duty, we find her engaged in the laborious work of the schoolroom. Other reasons, too obvious to require mention, will readily suggest themselves to those of our Sisters who knew Mother Clotilda and what she had been, during a long lifetime, to the Community of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

CHAPTER XVII

At St. Vincent's Again 1908 — Reappearance of Her Malignant Enemy in 1911 — Says a Last Good-bye to St. Vincent's June, 1912

SEPTEMBER, 1908, found Mother Clotilda back at her old post at St. Vincent's, much to the satisfaction of pastor and people, who had, in previous years, learned to appreciate her worth. The Sisters, too, were delighted beyond measure and thankful to the good God to have their Mother again in their midst. Soon the old routine was resumed, and the threads of former activities again taken up; devotion to the Sacred Heart cultivated more assiduously, if possible, than ever; and God continued to be lavish of His blessings. Everything seemed so like the dear old days that her absence of the previous year with all its anxious forebodings now appeared to her Sisters rather like the uncanny happenings of a feverish dream.

Mother Clotilda was, apparently, as well as ever and continued so, with the exception of one or two setbacks, until the spring of 1911, when her malignant enemy gave unmistakable signs of returning. About this time she wrote the follow-

ing letter to her devoted nephew, the Reverend Father O'Rafferty.

St. Vincent's, Detroit, Michigan
May 10, 1911

My own darling Nephew:

I want you to come to see me as soon as possible; I have important news to tell you. I don't want you to be sad about this or to take it too seriously, but you know my old malady is causing me pain and some worry. I do not mind the pain, I am happy over it and wish it were worse, for I love to suffer for the Sacred Heart of Jesus. My worry is more on account of my dear angels who watch me and are ever ready to serve me. I have asked dear Mother to grant me permission to tell you all, and to ask you some special favors, so I feel free to speak to you about these matters. Don't hurry, but if you can, come so that you can remain all night and say Mass for me on the Feast of Our Perpetual Mother, May twenty-fourth; I have many favors to ask the Sacred Heart of Jesus through our dear Mother of Perpetual Help.

I know you are not strong, but when you were a baby your dear mother brought you to me, and I held you in my arms, and asked the Sacred Heart of Jesus to make you a priest. This He has graciously answered. I also asked Him to make you a holy and humble priest; and I have prayed

ever since that you would not be a strong and well man, for I know what our family pride has caused me to suffer in being humble, and I wanted you humble; and if you were not strong, you would have to depend upon the Sacred Heart for your strength and ability to do your work, rather than upon yourself.

If it is possible, I want you to get permission to be my extraordinary confessor. Since our darling Father Joos has passed away, I feel that I have drifted from his wise counsels. You can take his place, and I will be as obedient as a little child. I can tell you all, and you will be generous enough to do the necessary things, which will relieve me of worry.

Come alone; both Father Doherty and Nora like you, and have told me you bring sunshine into their home, and my dear Sisters enjoy your visits so much; so darling I will look for you on the eve of our Blessed Mother's Feast and the Mass on the morning of the twenty-fourth will be all mine. You can give me Communion and offer the Holy Sacrifice for my intention. I will tell you all then.

Your devoted Aunt,
Sister M. CLOTILDA

"I have prayed that you would not be a well or strong man." Who but a saint could have made

such a prayer for one whom she loved, and loved dearly? And what stronger evidence could be given of the high value which our dear Mother set upon this too rare virtue, humility?

In the hope of giving one more year of service to her loved Community, our generous Mother courageously returned to St. Vincent's after the summer vacation. Always full of consideration for others, she strove to continue on duty till the end of the scholastic year so as not to inconvenience her Superior; but a loving God willed otherwise, and early in June she was forced to say a last good-bye to St.Vincent's and its many interests, and go home to die. Our dear Mother knew from experience the nature and extent of the suffering awaiting her; and she girded herself for the conflict with a holy courage, fervent prayer, and an entire abandonment to God's most holy will.

Her generous and loving acceptance of the Divine Will filled all her Sisters with admiration, and made them feel all the more deeply her loss; but the sorrow and the loneliness of her Sisters at St. Vincent's we shall leave untold, and record instead a few comments of those outside the Convent who, during the years she was Superior at St. Vincent's became acquainted with our wonderful Mother. Regrets for her going were heard on every side; not only among those of her own faith, but also among non-Catholics as well. The

following remarks are typical of the sentiments expressed by outsiders:

"If I am a practical Catholic today," said one man, "I owe it to Mother Clotilda."

"I am sorry to see her go," said a non-Catholic gentleman, "she possesses a wonderful influence for good; she is a loss to the city."

Our dear Mother came home June third, 1912. This day, the feast of her holy patron, St. Clotilda, — for so many years a day of gladness and rejoicing when she was General Superior of the Community, — deepened by contrast the sadness of this homecoming; but cheery as ever, we could not know from her bearing that our loved Mother was the victim of an incurable malady.

Number Six in St. Joseph's Infirmary was the room assigned to her use during the terrible ordeal of suffering that awaited her. Its walls were to be silent witnesses of countless acts of loving resignation, until entirely purified in the fiery crucible of pain, her great soul, resplendent with Heavenly radiance would fly to the Bosom of its God.

If patient suffering could sanctify a place, then was this room made holy — a veritable sanctuary. During the months that it remained untenanted after our saintly Mother's death, there were those of her Sisters who frequently stole

ROOM SIX, *St. Joseph's Infirmary*

quietly in, to meditate and pray, — to ask her intercession with God, for their own needs and the needs of the Community she loved and served with so much fidelity. We shall never realize until we enter Eternity what we, individually and as a Community, owe to the strong but silent influence of her holy life.

CHAPTER XVIII

Virtues Which Shone Out in Her Last Illness — Golden Jubilee — Last Days and Holy Death

FOR a time after her homecoming, Mother Clotilda continued to be present at the Community exercises; but the day came when this was no longer possible, when she was no longer able to leave her room. As her sufferings were daily and hourly increasing, so, too, did her generous love and holy resignation rise to higher and still higher levels; thus enabling her ever to preserve the same cheerful, patient, and loving demeanor in all and towards all.

Her resignation to the Divine Will, her cheerfulness, patience, gentleness, and the many other virtues which shone out conspicuously in her last illness, were the admiration, not only of her Sisters, but also of friends outside the Community who were privileged to see her. Among these may be mentioned Doctor James J. Walsh of New York, for the past quarter of a century or more, one of St. Mary's esteemed lecturers. This distinguished physician saw our saintly invalid several times during the last two years of her life;

and among other things he said of her, that he never saw anything like her cheerfulness under that disease. Her fortitude and loving acceptance of suffering were a source of edification and wonderment to all, but oh! how it wrung the hearts of her Sisters to look helplessly on, and see her suffer without being able to give the smallest relief!

Whenever you entered her room, you found her, with her rosary in her hand. You were greeted with a smile of welcome; but she did not lay aside her rosary; she held the bead between her fingers until the visitor withdrew, when she again resumed her rosary where it had been interrupted. And so the days, weeks, and months slowly and silently glided by with little to relieve the monotony of pain; but the end was drawing near. Shortly before it came, however, Mother Clotilda reached the Golden Milestone of her holy Profession (May 12, 1914).

The Sisters welcomed the occasion as it gave them once more an opportunity of showing to their venerated Superior of former days how dear she was to every Sister of the Immaculate Heart. In deference, however, to the expressed wish of the venerable Jubilarian, and for reasons too obvious to require mention, there was only a very simple recognition of the event.

At five o'clock P.M. on the eve, the Sisters as-

sembled in the Community room, which, in its drapings of white and gold, bespoke a joyousness that found but faint echo in the hearts of those present. Our dear invalid, with assistance, came to the Community room for a short half-hour. A jubilee song, prepared for the occasion, was followed by an address, replete with sentiments of affection and loving gratitude for her who had for so many years governed the Congregation and devoted herself, heart and soul, to further its interests. The barely suppressed emotion of the speaker, and the falling tears of the venerable Jubilarian as the words of loving congratulation were uttered, deeply touched the hearts of all present.

Mother Clotilda, in a few well-chosen words, gave expression to her love for the Sisters; told of the happiness she experienced, not only in the sentiments expressed in her regard, but also in the beautiful spirit of charity which reigned in the Community. In conclusion, as the Sisters gathered around her, she gave each a picture of the Sacred Heart, — a souvenir of the Jubilee.

For further details, the writer will here insert the account of Mother Clotilda's Golden Jubilee, written for the press, by Sister M. Imelda (Maybury) recently deceased (February 5, 1926).

"The fiftieth anniversary of Mother M. Clotilda's consecration to God was fittingly commemorated at St. Mary's on May twelfth. The High Mass at 7.30 A.M. celebrated by her nephew, the Reverend J. O'Rafferty of Durand, was sung by the Convent choir, a notable feature being the "Jubilate Deo" at the Offertory. The vocation hymn following the morning Sacrifice was exceedingly beautiful, and a touching memorial of the sacred vows made in the plain little chapel half a century ago; and the glory which will crown for all eternity the life rapidly nearing the Great White Throne.

"Mother Clotilda has exercised a large influence during the fifty years of her religious career; and in the office of General Superior (which she held for nineteen years), Mistress of Novices, and local Superior, she was distinguished for her fine powers of administration, her zealous efforts to extend and perfect the work of the Congregation, and the manifold virtues of a saintly life.

"The personality of this venerable religious has won for her the affection and reverence, not only of the Order she so long and faithfully served, but of all who came under her sweet, strong influence.

"St. Mary's children in the years preceding 1894, before the missions claimed the services of Mother Clotilda, were the objects of her tender solicitude and reciprocated her devotedness by a

loyal and loving remembrance, which on this occasion of her "golden jubilee," was particularly manifested in various forms.

"May 12, 1914, will ever be prominent in the annals of St. Mary's as a day hallowed by precious memories. For the esteemed Jubilarian, its glad hours were replete with congratulations and good wishes. Members of the Reverend Clergy, intimate friends, and her Sisters in religion, united in making this event of singular joyousness, a joyousness which seemed to find its true and exultant expression in the evening hour, when assembled again before the chapel altars, the large assemblage intoned in voices vibrant with emotion, the grand canticle of thanksgiving, "Holy God we praise Thy Name."

Two months and eleven days later our patient sufferer was called by her Divine Spouse to an Eternal Jubilee in Heaven. As quietly as a tired child goes to sleep on its mother's bosom, so quietly and gently did our dear Mother "fall asleep in the Lord." At eight o'clock, Thursday morning, on July twenty-third, the tolling of the chapel bell notified the Community that the end so long expected, so long dreaded had come. The Sisters assembled in the Chapel to pray for the holy repose of her soul, and to weep tears of deepest sorrow over their own irreparable loss in the

demise of this extraordinary, this saintly woman, — one of the strongest pillars of the Order from her Novitiate to her holy death, — one of its most brilliant lights for more than half a century of life in religion, — and one of the most potent forces for good, not only for her Sisters in religion, but also for all who were so privileged as to come within the gentle but irresistible influence of her holy life.

Could we but have followed, in spirit, the great soul of our saintly Mother, as she closed her eyes to earth, how quickly would our tears have been dried, and our sorrowing hearts filled with gladness and thanksgiving!

As her soul winged its ecstatic flight Heavenward, the "Beautiful Gate" swung ajar, revealing a host of radiant souls gathered near, in joyous expectancy, to welcome Home with songs of jubilation, one to whom they were all deeply indebted.* These, for the most part, are they whose erring feet she had guided into the "straight and narrow way," and helped by her holy prayers and good works to reach a happy eternity; but let not our imagination venture farther; for as the Apostle tells us, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard,

* "It is not for us to say who are worthy of praise or condemnation in the sight of our Supreme Judge; nor do we assume the right to canonize saintly souls, but in our poor eyes and frail judgment, we can pass upon the example and saintly practices of pious souls."

neither hath it entered the heart of man what things God hath prepared for them that love Him." (*St. Paul* 1. *Cor.*, II. 9.)

If this be said of the reward of the ordinary good Christian, what shall not be the reward of the true Spouse of Christ, — and such a one as our saintly Mother Clotilda.

Her holy remains were borne to St. Mary's Hall where they lay in a plain black casket until the hour for the funeral services. At the head of the casket was placed a large statue of the Sacred Heart, whose outstretched arms seemed extended to bless the sweet repose of her who had ever, in life, been a true and devoted lover of the dear Sacred Heart.

The funeral services took place Saturday morning, July 25, in the Convent Chapel. High Mass of Requiem was celebrated by the Reverend John O'Rafferty of Lansing, a nephew of our dear dead. The Right Reverend Monsignor F. J. Van Antwerp, V.G. acted as deacon; The Right Reverend Monsignor J. G. Doherty, as subdeacon; and the Reverend N. Miller, C.SS.R., as master of ceremonies.

The Right Reverend Bishop Foley chanted the "Libera" and gave the last absolution, after which he preached an eloquent sermon, in eulogy of our sainted dead. His words were a touching

The Right Reverend JOHN SAMUEL FOLEY
Late Bishop of Detroit

exposition of the beauty of a religious life, — the grandeur of its self-sacrifice; its typical exemplification in Mother Clotilda, and the reward exceeding great, which would be her portion for all eternity.

Following the "Benedictus," the procession of the clergy, cross-bearer, acolytes, and over four hundred Sisters sadly followed the loved remains to their final resting place in St. Joseph's Cemetery.

When our Right Reverend Bishop, who was in rather feeble health at the time was asked why he ventured to come to the funeral, he replied, "It is not every day we are called upon to bury a saint."

CHAPTER XIX

A Tribute to Mother Clotilda

THE Right Reverend Monsignor F. A. O'Brien, LL.D., in his sprightly parish journal, "The Augustinian," pays the following just and tender tribute to the character and life work of the late Reverend Mother Clotilda, for many years one of the best known members of the Community of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Monroe, Michigan:

"The old name clung to her and, although she was relieved from office several years ago and was simply Sister Clotilda, yet all her friends called her by the name that was hers, for so many years as head of the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, with headquarters at Monroe, Michigan.

"Quietly and peacefully in the fear and favor of God, this faithful servant closed her earthly life, in the famous old city, on July twenty-third, where for many years, with a dignity most gracious, she stood for the most distinguished things in public service, the head of a great educational institution, known at home and abroad for its re-

fining qualities. For fifty years a servant of her Community, as well as the public, she performed many wonderful and gracious deeds. A great helper to the late Right Reverend Monsignor Joos, of happy memory; she labored incessantly for the welfare of her spiritual daughters; was untiring in her endeavors for higher education, and did much for the entire country in her efforts to bring it about. A Superior of much more than ordinary ability, she was always fair and never asked a subject to do more than she would do herself. As we recall her shrinking modesty, and her quiet retiring nature, we hesitate to write even as much as we have about her. Her whole life flowed out, during all the years of her retirement, by instinct, as it were, to whatever offered the opportunity of service. All that she had, of the pent-up love of a woman's heart, poured itself out to administer to others, not only by generosity in the helps afforded, but in the gifts of personal care and sympathy. Where has there ever been a more conscientious and faithful stewardship than that which the Lord had put in her trust? Happy and satisfied in her convent home, with its privations and joys, she was the source of peace to those about her. She was like Anne, the prophetess, in her constant presence in God's house, and in gratefulness to find her Lord there, ever ready to be her comfort. She had the soul of a

little child in purity and simplicity. Patient to the end with unfailing trust, — through the many months of great suffering, keenly alive to all her personal interests and affections, she was permitted to bear the last test of faith, and to endure the discipline of pain; and she bore it with the same childlike confidence which had marked the development of her spiritual life. As she has passed from us, it is not too much to say that in consistent practice of the best virtues of a Christian, no one hath a more honored name than she.

"Her funeral took place on Saturday morning last, attended by the Right Reverend Bishop of the Diocese, and by a large number of clergymen, many of whom were her former pupils, as well as four hundred of her Sisters, who are left to mourn, and pray for the repose of her soul. At the mother-house she will be truly missed, in her companionship alike in labors, and the brief relaxations of life, leaving a bright and sunny memory to be cherished. Her remains were laid to sleep in the Sisters' cemetery, near the chapel, where reposes the saintly remains of the Right Reverend Monsignor Joos.

"God buries the worker but carries on the work. Unto His gracious mercy and protection we commit her, praying and believing that He will make His face to shine upon her, and give her peace for now and ever more."

APPENDIX

Lineage of Edwin Bennet Hoskyns

FOR the pleasure of her Sisters for whom, chiefly, this biography is written, the writer will give an extract from the family record of Edwin Bennet Hoskyns as found in Burke's English Peerage (1904).

"The Hoskyns family has been settled in Herefordshire, England, for more than four hundred years. John Hoskyns, Serjeant-at-law, and member of parliament for Hereford, was born in 1576. As he was related to William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester and founder of Winchester College, he was educated at this college. Later he became Fellow of New College, Oxford.

"He married Benedicta, daughter of Robert Moyle of Buckwell, Kent, by whom he had one son and one daughter.

"Mr. Serjeant Hoskyns was at one time committed to the Tower for alluding in his place in parliament to mercenary or Scottish favorites. He was the intimate companion of Sir Walter Raleigh, and Ben Jonson whose works he reviewed. He was a man of sarcastic wit, great talents, and much humor.

"At an entertainment which he gave to James I. at Morehampton Park, he amused His Majesty

with a morris-dance by ten persons whose united ages were said to have exceeded a thousand years, — 'a nest of Nestors' as they have been termed.

"His brother, the Reverend John Hoskyns, D.C.L., Fellow of New College, Oxford, was a distinguished preacher and chaplain to James I.

"The learned Serjeant was succeeded in his estates by his only son, Sir Bennet Hoskyns, first baronet of the name. He was elevated to the peerage, December eighteenth, 1676, by King Charles II. Sir Bennet was member of parliament for the County of Hereford. He married Anne, daughter of Sir Henry Bingley and by her had issue. He was succeeded by his eldest son,

"Sir John Hoskyns, second baronet, member of parliament for Hereford. He was president of the Royal Society, and one of the Masters in Chancery who received the honor of knighthood in the lifetime of his father; (this, we are told, was an unusual occurrence). This gentleman married Jane, daughter of Sir Gabriel Lowe, Knight (who was maternally descended from Walter, Lord Hungerford, a knight of the Garter in the reign of Henry VI), and had issue — his two immediate successors and other children. He was succeeded at his decease by his eldest son."

We shall run down the line until we reach the sixth baronet; merely noticing that the third baronet married Gertrude, daughter of Lord Arun-

del; and the fourth, married Mary, niece on her mother's side of the first Duke of Chandos.

Great-Grandfather and Great-Grandmother. Mother Clotilda's great-grandfather was Sir Hungerford Hoskyns, the sixth baronet of Hereford County and High Sheriff of Herefordshire. Her great-grandmother was Catherine, sister of Sir Edwin Francis Stanhope; and granddaughter of the Marquis of Carnarvon, eldest son of the Duke of Chandos.

Grandfather and Grandmother. Her grandfather was John Hoskyns, M.D., the fourth son of the sixth baronet. He was born at Morehampton Castle, Dublin. Her grandmother was Caroline Ellen, daughter and co-heir of Allen Ribton, of Little Forest and Kilmartin, Dublin.

We shall make another skip until we come to the last baronet mentioned in "Burke's Book of Peerage" (1904).

The Reverend Sir John Leigh Hoskyns, Baronet of Harewood, County Hereford; M.A., Oxford; Justice of the Peace, Berks.; Rector of Aston Tyrrold, Berks.; educated at Rugby and Balliol; honorable canon of Christ Church, Oxford; at one time fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford. He was born February 4, 1817, and succeeded his brother as ninth baronet in 1877. He married April 22, 1846, Phyllis Emma, daughter of Sir John Strutt Peyton, and has issue:

1. John, late lieutenant of the 24th regiment; died unmarried 1877.
2. Chandos (John's twin brother), colonel of the Royal Engineers has,
   1. *Euphemia*
   2. *Muriel*
   3. *Elizabeth Mary*
3. Leigh, B.A. Trinity College, barrister-at-law, etc.; married Frances Hester Frederica, daughter of John Samuel Bowles, of Milton Hill, Berks., and has issue:
   1. *Edwin Cecil Leigh*
   2. *Mary Leigh*
   3. *Frances Etrenne*
   4. *Catherine Emma*
4. Edwin (Right Reverend), D.D., M.A. of Jesus College, Cambridge; bishop suffragan of Burnley; born May 22, 1851; married Mary Constance Maude, daughter of Robert Benson, Craven Hill Gardens, W. and has issue:
   1. *Edwin Clement,* born 1884.
   2. *Phyllis Eleanor*
   3. *Evelyn Mary*
5. Peyton, C.M.G., M.V.O., Captain of the Royal Navy, born 1852; married 1882 Grace McDuff, daughter of D.M. Latham of Gourock and has issue:
   1. *Oswald Peyton Latham,* born 1883.

2. *John Walter,* born 1892.
3. *Grace*
4. *Dorothy*

6. Benedict George (Reverend) M.A. Jesus College, Cambridge; vicar of Brighton, Canon and prebendary of Chichester Cathedral; diocesan missioner 1895–1902; late incumbent of St. Deny's, Southampton, 1888–'95; married November 5, 1895, Dora Katherine, daughter of the late H. W. Franklyn of Sheffield Lodge, Hants. and has issue:

1. *Chandos Benedict Arden*
2. *Diana Mary Katherine*
3. *Emma*

Creation — December 18, 1676.

Arms — Per. pale azure and gules, a chevron between three lions rampant or crest. A lion's head erased or, flames of fire issuing from the mouth ppr.

Residence — Aston Tyrrold Rectory, Berks.

Schools Established by Mother Clotilda

BEFORE Mother Clotilda became General Superior in '69, the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart had opened about a dozen diocesan schools. When established, they were small, not requiring more than three or four Sisters, one of whom acted as housekeeper. In their first years these schools not infrequently had to battle stoutly for existence. One school was even forced to close after a year or two of unsuccessful struggle, to reopen later under more favorable circumstances.

Another school was saved from a similar fate by the generosity of the General Superior who took a music teacher from the academy and sent her to this mission to help the pastor out of his dilemma; but more of this anon.

During Mother Clotilda's administration eleven new diocesan schools were added to the number already existing; and a normal school at the Mother-house where the younger members of the Community could be prepared for the great work of Catholic education.

In these schools and other works of zeal, which had their rise in her administration, there have

been developments of which our zealous Mother could hardly have dreamed. St. Mary's, Mount Clemens, is a striking example in point.

This school, opened in 1870, was one of the most backward in growth. After twenty years it was still housed in the small frame building erected in 1870 by the young and zealous pastor of Saint Peter's, the Reverend Camillus P. Maes; later, Bishop of Covington, Kentucky.

When this energetic young priest became pastor of Saint Peter's, Mount Clemens, in 1869, he immediately set to work to provide a school for the little ones of his flock. He succeeded in erecting a two-story frame structure, containing four rooms and then applied to Mother Clotilda for three Sisters — two teachers and a housekeeper.

In September the following Sisters had the happy privilege of being sent as pioneers in this good work: Sisters DeSales and Adelaide for school; and a novice, Sister M. Victoria (Fohey), as housekeeper. These Sisters were long and gratefully remembered by both parents and children as the following little incident, which occurred many years later, will show:

The writer chanced to be the traveling companion of Sister DeSales on the occasion, and was thus an interested looker-on at the very pleasant meeting of teacher and former pupil. Sister DeSales and companion were bound for Mount

Clemens. No sooner had they boarded the train and seated themselves than a man came forward, his face beaming with pleasure, and the following conversation ensued: "Sister DeSales, don't you know me? I was your schoolboy in Mount Clemens when the school first opened." Sister looked puzzled and slightly embarrassed; but how could she be expected to recognize in this tall man, with his be-whiskered, sun-browned face, the lad of fourteen who, twenty years before, had occupied a desk in her schoolroom? He broke in on her unsuccessful efforts at recognition with, "O, Sister, don't you remember Charlie So-and-so?" Of course Sister remembered Charlie, was delighted to see him, and a warm handshake followed.

Charlie then proceeded to give a most interesting account of himself from his schooldays. Among other things, he told Sister that he was happily married, had a wife and three little children. Sister interrupted his interesting story to inquire, if he went regularly to the sacraments, as had been his practice when a schoolboy. He replied at once with evident candor that he went to confession and Holy Communion every month; moreover, if he were disposed to be careless or negligent, his wife, who was a very pious woman, would not permit it.

From what he said of himself, the writer

gleaned that God had blessed him with temporal goods; that while he was not in the modern sense of the term a rich man, he had a comfortable home, made beautiful by an excellent wife and lovely children; that he was sufficiently prosperous to give them, not only the necessaries, but some of the luxuries of life, and that they were very happy. Charlie's story seemed to the writer a striking illustration of these words of our Blessed Lord: "Seek ye, therefore, first the kingdom of God and His justice and all these things shall be added unto you" (*Matt.* VI, 33).

Sister DeSales and her two zealous companions have long since entered upon their eternity, but the good they have done lives on; while they, we may confidently hope, are in the enjoyment of the reward promised by our Blessed Lord to all those who instruct many unto justice.

To return to our subject, the school. Twenty years after this school began its existence, it was still functioning in the old frame building of 1870. The liveliest imagination could not then have pictured on those grounds, a school with equipment such as that of which Saint Peter's parish is the proud possessor today.

The old building has given place to, not only a fine up-to-date grammar school, but there is also a high school probably second to none in the diocese. It is equipped with fine laboratories,

chemical and physical, and a well-stocked library. As we have seen, it opened in 1870 with two teachers, it now employs twenty-five. There were in the scholastic year ending June, 1927, about two hundred fifty students in the high school, from which thirty-five were graduated in June, the majority of whom were young men.

Many of St. Mary's boys of past years, we are told, are successful and prominent merchants in their home towns; while others have entered the learned professions and are making enviable reputations for themselves as doctors, lawyers, etc.

It is hardly necessary to add that this up-to-date school has a place on the university list of accredited schools.

Still in vocations to the holy priesthood and to the religious state Saint Mary's, Mount Clemens has been considerably surpassed by other schools founded later by our zealous Mother, — notably Saint John's, Jackson, and Saint Vincent's, Detroit.

The first graduating class of St. Mary's, Mount Clemens, numbered only seven girls, yet it gave two of its members to the Convent; but for thirty years this good example has had only a small number of followers. However, a new start in the right direction has recently been taken, and let us hope for generous results.

ST. MARY'S HIGH SCHOOL, *Mount Clemens*

SCHOOLS ESTABLISHED

The following is a list of the diocesan schools established by our zealous Mother:

1. Holy Cross, Marine City, 1869
2. Saint Mary's, Mount Clemens, 1870
3. Saint Theresa's, Muskegon, 1871
4. Saint Boniface's, Detroit, 1872
5. Saint John's, Jackson, 1873
6. Saint Vincent's, Detroit, 1874
7. Our Lady of Help, Detroit, 1875
8. Saint Michael's, Flint, 1877
9. Our Lady of Loretto, Kal., 1878
10. Saint Patrick's, Wyandotte, 1885
11. Saint Peter & Paul's, Detroit, 1893

Later the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary were withdrawn from Muskegon and Kalamazoo, leaving at the present time, nine schools which were established by Mother Clotilda. All these schools, with but one exception, have been carrying high school courses for many years, and have won a place on the university list of accredited schools.

For many reasons Saint Vincent's, Detroit, merits special mention; but more particularly for the fact that, to this school, the last labors of our saintly Mother were consecrated. Here she spent eighteen of the last years of her holy life; from Saint Vincent's she came home to die.

This school was opened by Mother Clotilda,

September 3, 1874, at the request of the Reverend Father Van Paemel, Pastor. During its earlier years, it had to contend with rather adverse circumstances, and was in a more or less languishing condition, when the Reverend James G. Doherty, later Monsignor Doherty, came to Saint Vincent's as its pastor.

The old frame building, much too small from the beginning, soon gave place to the handsome brick structures which adorn the city today. The Sisters' house was enlarged, and made more comfortable in many ways.

The grounds about the school and convent were converted into a handsome park, adorned with numerous flower-beds, in which the scarlet blossoms of the geranium were conspicuous.

With these roomy, pleasant, and attractive quarters, the school attendance was multiplied, and rapid progress made. In short, with the coming of this zealous priest to Saint Vincent's there was infused into the place a new life. Moreover, there appeared to be aroused among the priests of the city a holy rivalry with regard to school equipment, so that in a few years Detroit was in the lead, — was noted for its handsome parochial school buildings.

Priests and religious from the East have repeatedly assured us that there is nothing in their parochial system to compare with the schools of

ST. VINCENT'S SCHOOL, *Detroit*

Detroit. Some share of the credit, we think, is due to that eminent school-man, the late Right Reverend Monsignor J. G. Doherty.

Then, too, the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart claim no small share in these handsome parochial school buildings. By contributing, in music money, several thousand dollars towards their own salary each year, they have made it possible and somewhat easy for Detroit to lead all the dioceses in the country in the beauty and splendid equipment of its parochial schools. Much as it has cost them, the Sisters rejoice and are proud to have had no inconsiderable share in this good work.

And now, that our zealous Mother General is striving to crown this splendid parochial high school system with a college for young ladies which will, in every way, be worthy of it, it would seem that all, whether priest or layman, who are interested in Catholic education, would willingly do whatever lies in their power to uplift and strengthen the hands of those who, with a courage almost superhuman, are battling against great odds in the cause of Catholic education.

We shall add to this article the following brief community statistics, which, we think, may be of interest to the reader:

When Mother Clotilda pronounced her holy vows May 12, 1864, she entered a community of

only twenty-six members. Five years later when she became its General Superior for the first time, the number of professed Sisters had increased to seventy-eight. In 1894, when Mother Clotilda ceased to hold the office of General Superior, the number of professed members reached 263; and at her death in 1914 there were 333.

All these figures give the total number of professed Sisters from the foundation of the Community in 1845 to the given date. At present, August 25, 1927, there are 724 under final vows; if to this number we add 102 who have taken temporary vows, it will make the number of professed Sisters, since the foundation, 826. Deducting the number who have died since 1845, there remain, at present 624 living members. This, of course, does not include the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart in the East, who greatly outnumber us of the Mother House, probably two to one.

The number of students taught by the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart in the school year of 1925–'26 was 29,320.

In Detroit Diocese, 27,191.

In Cleveland Diocese, 1,966.

In Chicago Diocese, 163.

Right Reverend Monsignor E. Joos

NOVEMBER fifth, 1857, the Reverend Edward Joos, later known as the Right Reverend Monsignor Joos, was appointed by his Lordship, the Bishop of Detroit, Pastor of St. Mary's Church, Monroe, Michigan, and Director of the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

At his coming the Community numbered only fourteen members; but, under his fatherly care, such was the rapidity of its growth that in 1871, Father Joos was obliged to give up all parish work and devote himself exclusively to the needs of the Institution and its schools, a work for which he was eminently fitted by his admirable qualities of heart and mind, as well as by early training. From his coming to the diocese to the close of a long and saintly life, he was distinguished for his great zeal for Catholic education.

His weekly conferences, or instructions to the Community during a period of forty-four years, are a convincing proof of the foregoing statements. These conferences, taken down when delivered, have been reproduced with so much exactness that, as we listen to their reading, we

fancy that we hear the dear voice, so long silent, again in gentle, but earnest tones, exhorting us to the practice of one or the other virtue; or warning against pitfalls that might lie in our way.

Although these conferences are read to us during our annual retreat every summer vacation, so far from tiring of them, they seem to take on an added interest at each repetition, and grow more and more beautiful. No matter how eloquent, learned, and holy may be the priest who conducts our annual retreat each year, we never hear anything which strikes home more clearly and convincingly than do the words contained in those conferences of our dear saintly Father. All that a perfect Sister, Servant of the Immaculate Heart of Mary should be, is so entirely embodied in them, that as you read or listen, the feeling grows on you that our dear Father's every word was inspired by the Holy Spirit of God and we wonder how, with such training, it was possible that even one of his spiritual daughters should fail to attain a high degree of perfection and sanctity.

Our dear saintly Mother whose story these pages are striving to tell was one of the number who profited to the full by those wonderful instructions. In her strong soul the good seed found a generous soil, and it brought forth fruit a hundredfold.

Brief biographical sketches of Monsignor Joos

The Right Reverend MONSIGNOR EDWARD JOOS, V.G.

have already appeared; but a fuller and more detailed account of the life-work of this saintly priest is in the course of preparation and will soon, we trust, be given to the public.

We shall merely add to this brief notice, that whatever the Community of the Immaculate Heart has of good, — its beautiful religious spirit, zeal for souls, and for Catholic education, — it owes, after God, chiefly to the fatherly care of this saintly priest, who labored unceasingly for its spiritual and temporal welfare from his coming in 1857 to his holy death in 1901. May he rest in peace.

The Life of Sister Mary Brigid Smith

1845-1873

OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE SISTERS, SERVANTS OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

CHAPTER I

Birth — Childhood — and Home

SISTER MARY BRIGID (Mary Agatha Smith), the fourth in a family of twelve children, was born August 8, 1845. Her parents, Michael Smith and Brigid Caulfield, were natives of Roscommon County, Ireland. When Mary Agatha was a babe in her mother's arms, Mr. Smith, bidding farewell to the land of his birth, brought his family to this country, and chose for their home the city of Chicago, which even at this early date gave promise of future greatness. He built a commodious frame house on Sherman Street a few steps only from the church of St. Louis, where later the little Mary Agatha, remarkable for piety from her tenderest years, often spent hours in sweet converse with her Eucharistic God. Mrs. Smith, who was something of an heiress for her day, took up in her own right a lot in a distant part of the city. On this lot she built a neat brick dwelling house for renting. While the parents were comfortably off as to the goods of this world, they were immeasurably richer in their strong Catholic faith and their many sterling virtues.

Mrs. Smith, like so many mothers of holy Ireland, was a woman of deep, fervent piety; and this piety she strove by word and example to instill into the hearts of all her children. Little Mary Agatha, in particular, drank in with avidity those holy lessons of a loving mother; and the seed of divine love, thus early sown, found in the heart of this angelic child a soil, rich beyond measure, in which the good seed took root, early matured, and brought forth the hundredfold of the Gospel story. Let me mention here a beautiful custom in this model Catholic family, one well worthy of imitation. Night prayers which consisted of the Rosary, the Litany of our Blessed Lady, and the Salve Regina, were always in common the year round. Also, before each of the principal feasts of the Church, a Novena of preparation was added to the night prayers. It was in the religious atmosphere of this truly Catholic home that Mary Agatha lived her girlhood years, and daily grew in the knowledge and love of things divine.

Mrs. Smith, while always a loving and tender mother, had no intention of bringing up a family of weaklings. She accustomed her children, from their earliest years, to the practice of self-denial. She taught them to make little sacrifices suitable to their years; to be unselfish, willingly sharing toys, sweetmeats and the like, with others. As

MARY AGATHA SMITH (*Sister* M. BRIGID)
At the age of fifteen

they advanced in years, more was required. This, she was convinced, would help to build up strong characters. Mrs. Smith may not even have heard of our present day psychology; but she had methods of her own, based on the teachings of the Gospel, and her methods brought results. The Fourth Commandment was not reversed in this household. To encourage her little ones in the practice of self-denial, not always easy, this good mother frequently told them stories from the lives of the Saints, — of their heroic sacrifices and sufferings for the love of the good God. And here, again, she found her little Agatha an apt pupil, who exemplified in her daily life those precious lessons of a loving mother.

A little incident, which occurred when Mary Agatha was about four years old, will not be out of place here. Having heard her mother speak of the Carmelites going barefoot at all seasons, she naturally concluded that all religious observed this custom. It seemed a wise thing to this little head of four years, to test her own ability to endure this rigorous penance; for be it remembered, this precocious child had already determined to be a nun when she was grown. One day in midwinter our little would-be ascetic removed her shoes and stockings, went out into the snow in her bare feet, and bravely stood there until, fortunately, she was discovered by her watchful

mother and brought indoors; not soon enough, however, to avert the consequences of this innocent indiscretion. Pneumonia set in and our little Mary Agatha was confined for weeks to a bed of pain. For a time the life of this precious child was despaired of. But God had a work for Mary Agatha to do, and she must get strong to do it.

Away down in southeastern Michigan (in those days of slow travel S. E. Michigan seemed a long way from Chicago) in the little town of Monroe, a saintly Redemptorist had founded a religious Community in the year in which Mary Agatha was born. This Community was dedicated to Mary's Immaculate Heart. Though planted by holy hands, it was a difficult matter for the little seedling to take root in the (at the time), uncongenial soil of Monroe. At the time of which we are writing, it was making a desperate struggle for existence.* It was in this struggling Community, so dear to the Heart of Jesus and His Blessed Mother, that Mary Agatha's future life-work would be found. But twelve years, at least, must intervene before our future Apostle (now only four years of age) can join this courageous band of generous souls; but they will, however, be years of preparation for her apostolate. Like her Divine Exemplar she will

* A very interesting account of this foundation may be seen in the "Retrospect" by Sister M. Loyola (Shanley).

The Reverend LOUIS FLORENT GILET
Founder of the Congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

grow in wisdom and grace, for in the Divine plan, Mary Agatha is destined to be a chosen instrument for untold good to numberless souls. Who, but God alone, can say how many souls would have perished and been lost to the Church and to God eternally had not her holy hands been stretched out at the critical moment, to snatch them, as it were, like brands from the burning!

Lest any reader of this sketch should get the impression that there was anything morbid, unwholesome, or unbalanced in this child's piety or character, let it be said before going further, that Mary Agatha was a perfectly normal child, endowed from infancy with a very happy disposition. As she advanced in girlhood years, she proved to be the life of her home. She seems to have had a decided penchant for playing little harmless jokes on others which usually contributed to the merriment of the family. So cheerful and full of innocent gayety was our little hidden saint that no one, not even her pious mother, so much as suspected the marvels of grace being wrought by the Holy Ghost in the soul of this privileged child.

When Mary Agatha was of school age, she was sent to school to the Sisters of Mercy. She received her education at the old St. Xavier's Academy, Wabash Avenue. The fame of this school, even at that early date reached far beyond the

limits of Chicago. Mary Agatha carried with her ever after, a grateful and loving remembrance of her teachers, and of her school days at St. Xavier's.

The following events, though not occurring until several years later, when Mary Agatha's short life was nearing its close, may be recorded here: —St. Xavier's with the old home on Sherman Street in which Mary Agatha was cradled, and which was sanctified by her innocence and virtue; also the church of St. Louis, where as a little child she had so often wept tears of sympathy at the foot of our Sorrowful Mother's statue, were all swept away in the ruthless fire that blotted out a large part of Chicago in 1871. The family fled from their home, leaving behind most of their valuables, glad and thankful to have saved their lives from the devouring flames. This must have been a severe trial to our saintly Sister, as all these places named, her old home, school, and church were very dear to her tender and sympathetic heart.

It is to be regretted that we possess so few details of this period of Mary Agatha's life. We have passed over her First Holy Communion, that greatest of days in the life of every Catholic child; but we can feel sure that this holy child prepared for it with angelic fervor. She was very fond of reading, her favorite books being the lives of the

Saints. She did not read, as so many do, to be amused, or entertained; or what is reprehensible, to " kill time." She, too, desired to become a saint, and being of a practical turn of mind she strove to imitate their pious deeds. Having read of a saint who sprinkled ashes on his food, she determined to do likewise. Her sister, older by two years, found her sprinkling ashes on her bread and butter and reported the matter promptly to her mother, who at once put a stop to such practices.

When Mary Agatha had completed her fifteenth year, Dr. McMullen, her director and confessor decided to send her to a Convent. He chose the novitiate of the Sisters of Mercy at St. Xavier's Academy, where Mary Agatha had been educated, as the one most desirable. But St. Xavier's in the designs of the good God, was not to possess this treasure. Chancing to mention the matter (or was it after all, chance?) to his friend, the Rev. Tom Burke of St. Columbkille's, who was also a warm friend of the Smith family, he persuaded Dr. McMullen to send her, if possible, to the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, recently founded at Monroe, Michigan, by a holy Redemptorist. Father Burke was interested in this Community as his sister (Mary Joanna) was a member of the Order. The matter was decided then and there, and Mary Agatha accepted the

decision of her director as God's will for her. If this new arrangement entailed greater sacrifices, as it certainly did, she welcomed it for that very reason; it would give her all the more to offer to that God to whose love she had been devoted from babyhood. She prepared without delay, to sever the sweet ties that bound her to home and dear ones.

Knowing what a loving nature was hers, we feel sure that this breaking of home ties was not accomplished without severe suffering. It was particularly hard to part with the little ones of the family. It had been her custom, a self-imposed task and one very dear to her, to take the youngest in her arms when bedtime came and rock it to sleep; then gently laying it in its little cot, tuck it in cozily for the night. In the first weeks of her postulate her thoughts sometimes strayed westward to the dear old home on Sherman Street and she said to herself, "I wonder who is rocking little Bernard to sleep tonight."

Because religious break all earthly ties to give themselves to God in religion, they are often accused of being heartless, — without love for home and relatives. The very reverse is the truth. Their love is deeper, more unselfish, more tender, more true. St. Alphonsus tells us that "to love God without at the same time loving our neighbor is impossible"; the one seems to be a measure of

the other. The fact that religious renounce the sweetest ties of earth to do God's will, but proves that their love for Him transcends all other loves, and the greater their love for God, the greater must be their love for home and its dear ones.

CHAPTER II

Enters the Novitiate — First Great Cross — Returns to Chicago

EARLY in the spring of that fateful year, 1861, our land was overshadowed by threatening war clouds and the air vibrant with the angry passions of men. Fort Sumter had just been fired upon, and the greatest excitement everywhere prevailed. Here and there might be seen knots of desperate men, discussing the gravity of the situation and taking sides for or against the war.

It was in such a setting, that Mary Agatha said good-bye to home and dear ones, and boarded the train for Monroe. How sharp the contrast between the tense agitation which prevailed around her, and the peace and heavenly joy that filled the heart of this young girl who had just given up all that was dearest to her in the world to consecrate body and soul to the love and service of her God. As the train rolled its slow length Monroewards, her heart was, doubtless, singing glad Te Deums that the day so longed for had at last arrived, — that before its close she would be in God's own house and would sleep under the same

roof with her beloved Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Mother Mary Joseph, the saintly Superior of the Community, received the new candidate with open arms. From the letters of Dr. McMullen, Mother Mary Joseph expected to receive a young lady of exceptional merit, nor was she disappointed; her expectations were more than realized. A saint herself, Mother Mary Joseph was not slow in recognizing the treasure that God had sent her in the person of the young lady from Chicago, whose charming and gentle manner won all hearts at once.

With the utmost ardor of her generous soul, the young neophyte gave herself to the practice of all religious virtues, and to the perfect fulfillment of even the smallest duty imposed upon her. In fact nothing was small in her eyes, for was it not done to please God? and nothing is small, we are told, that is done from a divine motive. Mother Mary Joseph found it necessary to moderate Mary Agatha's zeal for perfection, lest the frail body might not be able to keep pace with the fervor of the spirit. Notwithstanding the precautions of the wise Superior, Mary Agatha, after a few weeks of unalloyed happiness, fell seriously ill. Dr. Arnold, the Convent physician, and a non-Catholic, was called in. After attending her for a few days, he counseled the Superior to send her home. He pronounced her wholly unfit to

stand the hard life of the Sisters. Mother Mary Joseph finally decided to follow, in part, the doctor's advice. As Mary Agatha was only fifteen she would send her home for a year or two, but with a promise, not conditioned, of returning at the end of that time. Mother Mary Joseph's tender heart shrank from making known this decision to the fervent young candidate, because of the anguish of heart it would cause her. She put off the painful duty until Mary Agatha was fully recovered from her illness, and able to make the journey to Chicago.

This was the first great cross that had come into Mary Agatha's young life; but believing with a firm faith the words of the Apostle, " All things work together unto good to those who love God," she accepted this decision of her Superior, without murmur or any outward sign of pain within. Mary Agatha was no tyro in the ways of God. She entered the school of perfection almost as soon as she left her cradle; as soon as she was able to lisp the name of that God to whom she had given the undivided love of her young heart. She had learned in this school to accept the bitter with the sweet, with a preference for the bitter, and would she falter now?

Always noted for obedience, she prepared at once to carry out the instructions of her Superior: — She is to go home, do all in her power to

The Reverend EGIDIUS SMULDERS, C.SS.R.

grow strong, and return at the end of one, or two years at most. In the meantime she will write frequently to Mother Mary Joseph, and receive letters from her in return. This close correspondence between mother and spiritual daughter will greatly help to brighten for Mary Agatha her period of enforced exile. The Smith family preserved Mother Mary Joseph's letters as precious treasures until they were unfortunately reduced to ashes ten years later in the great Chicago fire. If those letters were in existence today, what a valuable contribution would they not make to this meager biographical sketch.

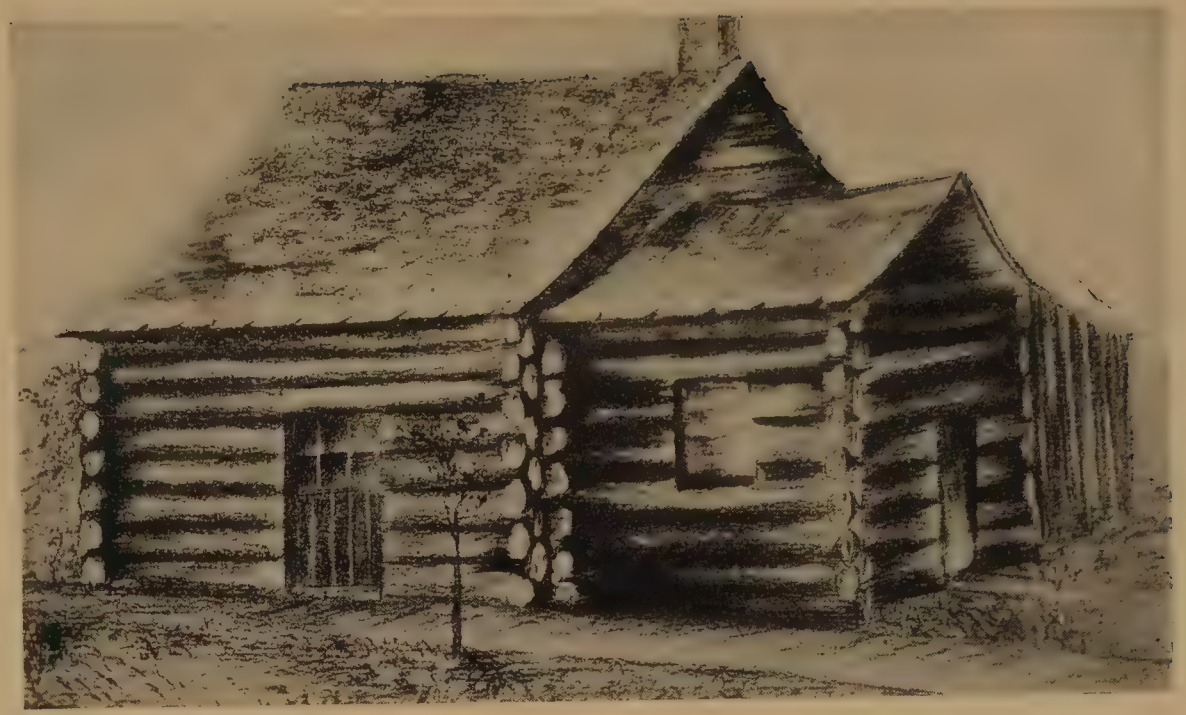
CHAPTER III

Enters the Novitiate a Second Time — St. Mary's in July '63 — Novitiate Companions — Reception — Profession

IN this world of ours, all things whether sweet or bitter, joyful or sorrowful, pass away. So, too, did Mary Agatha's exile. Just two years from that July day in '61 when she had said a tearful good-bye to the Sisters in "blue," we find her again ringing the Convent doorbell for admittance. The warm welcome received from the saintly Mother Mary Joseph and her Community almost compensated for her long absence. As this is the date from which her Convent Life is reckoned, we shall leave our fervent neophyte in her happy novitiate and turn aside for a few moments to give our readers a little glimpse of St. Mary's in July, '63.

The "Log-cabin," the cradle of the Community from '45–'48, had given place in '48 to a two-story frame building to which, three years later, a western wing was added. As Reverend Father Smulders,* who was in charge at that time, was

* The Reverend Egidius Smulders, C. SS. R. succeeded the Reverend Louis Florent Gilet as director of the little Community. He it was who gave the Community its



THE OLD LOG CABIN

First Convent of the Sisters of the I. H. M.

unable to defray the expenses entailed by the new addition, the Redemptorist Provincial, the celebrated Father Bernard, generously advanced the sum necessary.

To the little band of heroic souls who had occupied the log cabin, their new home must have seemed a veritable palace in comparison. But, however palatial the new building may have seemed, it was greatly lacking in much that today would be counted among the absolutely necessary. To mention only a few things: — it was heated by a hot-air furnace, re-enforced by a stove here and there. The only fuel used was wood. This palace was lighted by tallow candles. To keep the candlesticks and several pairs of snuffers clean and ready for use each evening, constituted an important charge for some member of the novitiate. There were also a few lanterns to be used in going about the house after dark. There were no bathtubs, — no conveniences for bathing. When a Sister needed some hot water in her cell, it had to be carried up from the kitchen below. If she was too infirm or unable to perform this service for herself, there were always charitable companions who considered it a

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beautiful title of Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. He also authorized the Sisters to change the color of their habit from black, the color first worn, to blue in honor of the Immaculate Conception of our Blessed Lady.

privilege to do her this little kindness. "Whatsoever ye do to the least of these My brethren, ye do it unto Me," seemed to be their guiding principle in all that pertained to their neighbor. First and foremost in rendering those and other charitable services to her neighbor, was the frail Sister whose story these pages are striving to tell.

It may be remarked, in passing, that the contrast between this palace of pioneer days, and the comforts and conveniences St. Mary's offers to her young lady boarders today, is immeasurably greater than that which it made with the log cabin.

Now, a brief mention of one of Mary Agatha's novitiate companions. About two months before Mary Agatha's entrance into the novitiate, Lucy Hoskyns had received the holy habit, taking the name of Mary Clotilda, a name inexpressibly dear to every Sister of the Immaculate Heart who knew her. Sister Mary Clotilda was, in the designs of God, to do great things for the little Community she was about to enter. She made her holy vows in 1864 and within five years from that date, she stood at the head of the Community as its General Superior. From her election in 1869, for the following twenty-five years, she was alternately General Superior and Mistress of Novices; her life was thus intimately interwoven with that

of every Sister of the Immaculate Heart. That our deep indebtedness to her for her long years of service in training the members of the Community in the true religious spirit, the spirit of the Immaculate Heart, so clearly set forth by our dear Father in his many instructions and conferences during a period of more than forty years; — and that the precious memory of her saintly life may be preserved for future generations of our Sisters, a separate biography will be written; so we shall leave her with this brief notice.

To return to the subject of this biography whom we left at her entrance into the novitiate. When the happy days of her Postulate were accomplished, Mary Agatha prepared with extraordinary fervor for the reception of the holy habit, October thirteenth, 1863. The ceremony took place in the Sisters' Chapel, Reverend Father Joos presiding. The new novice received the name of Sister Mary Brigid.

The novitiate in which Sister Brigid was trained was not a large one. There were not more than five members at any given time; but Sisters Clotilda and Brigid were there, and they were a host in themselves. We are told that Sister Brigid drew all hearts to herself by her charity and sweet sympathy in the little difficulties and trials inseparable from the time of novitiate. If one had a hard task to perform, Sister Brigid, though

never strong, could always find the time and the strength to lend a helping hand. Her perfect obedience, her exact fulfillment of the smallest points of the rule, were incentives to those who, perhaps, less favored by nature and grace, stood in need of encouragement.

We can imagine a holy rivalry between herself and that other equally ardent and generous soul, Sister Clotilda. They were both more in need of a bridle than of a spur in the way of perfection. Their good Mistress of Novices, Sister Theresa, but recently arrived from Belgium, that land so fertile in zealous priests and religious, must have had her preconceived notions of the "American barbarian" considerably modified by what she saw of the fervor and religious spirit of the novitiate over which she was called to preside.

And so the time of Sister Brigid's probation glided by, bringing her nearer and nearer to the happy day so longed for, — the day when she would be permitted to pronounce the holy vows that would bind her irrevocably to that God whom alone she had loved — to whom she had given, from her tenderest years, the undivided love of her innocent young heart. At last the thirteenth of October, '64 arrived. The ceremony of profession took place privately in the Sisters' Chapel, Reverend Father Director presiding. This much is easily told; but who will venture to

tell in cold words of the burning fervor, the ecstasy of soul, with which she pronounced those holy vows that made her the bride of Christ forever. The ring with its beautiful inscription, "Ego te sponsabo," is on her finger. It will ever be a loved reminder and a sweet pledge of her espousals, by Holy Church, to the King of Heaven. O the peace! the sweet contentment! the heavenly joy that is hers! Earth has nothing more to give. Only death which will open the portals of Heaven and bring her face to face with the Bridegroom of her soul, can add to the holy joy that now inundates her whole being.

CHAPTER IV

Sister Brigid appointed General Mistress of the Boarding School — Death of Mother Mary Joseph — The Three Marum Sisters Enter the Noviciate — Opening of the Boarding School — First Brick Building — First New Piano

SISTER BRIGID made her holy vows on October 13, '64. Five days later the Community met with a great sorrow in the death of their saintly Superior, Mother Mary Joseph. Although she had been so ill the last two years of her holy life that she seldom left her room, the Sisters would not give her a successor, but retained their beloved Mother in office to the end. One of the last acts of her beautiful life was to name Sister Mary Brigid as General Mistress of the boarding school.

Sister Brigid had hardly entered upon her twentieth year when she was placed in this responsible position. She was young in years for such responsibility, it is true, but wise with the wisdom of the saints; and well fitted by nature and grace to be the guiding spirit — the visible Guardian Angel — of the infant boarding school. We have given elsewhere a detailed account of its beginning and will refer to it here only briefly.

It was not until September, '62 that the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary opened a boarding school at Monroe. Such a step was, no doubt, contemplated from the beginning, but not till fourteen years after they had left the log cabin were they able to realize their desire. Like the Community itself, St. Mary's Academy had a very humble beginning. From January, '46 to September, '62, the Sisters conducted a day school only. The few boarders received during that period were chiefly children who lived at too great a distance from the Church to attend the Catechism instructions preparatory to their first Holy Communion. These children were taken as boarders for three months usually; but not till '62 did the Sisters open a boarding school in the proper sense of the term.

In April of that year, God gave the little Community a signal mark of His loving Providence when three sisters, Kate, Mary, and Julia Marum entered the novitiate and together received the holy habit July 18th, taking the names of Chantal, Angela, and Godelieve, respectively. These accomplished young women had been educated by the Ladies of the Sacred Heart and were capable of giving invaluable assistance to the little Community, which at this time consisted of only about eighteen living members.

These three sisters would at any time and un-

der any circumstances have been regarded as an important acquisition; but coming, as they did, at this particular time, when the Sisters were about to open the boarding school, they must have seemed a veritable Godsend. Sister Godelieve was placed in charge of the school; Sister Angela, a fine musician, was made head of the department of music; Sister Chantal was given charge of the pupils' sewing and also acted as portress, an office which she held during her entire religious life. As the story of the three Marum sisters is told in a separate biographical sketch, we will return to Sister Brigid and again take up the thread of her story.

When Sister Brigid became General Mistress in 1864, the number of resident pupils must have been small, since in '67 they were still a small family, only about forty in number. But notwithstanding this fact, her charge was a most important one; in some respects more responsible and difficult than is the position of the capable corps of directresses of today (1926). You will remember that the boarding school began its existence in 1862, two years before Sister Brigid was placed in charge, and it might be said to be still in its cradle. It was probably little known outside of Monroe City. It had at this time few patrons and fewer pupils. Patronage had to be gained and pupils won. Now, let your imagina-

ST. MARY'S ACADEMY *in* 1862

The old frame building which succeeded the Log Cabin

tion picture the bare frame building of the early 'sixties, with nothing attractive in itself or in its surroundings, and you can readily understand how difficult was the task that confronted Sister Brigid and her co-workers. Compare this picture with St. Mary's of today.

For many years the Academy has held an assured place in the educational world. Its reputation was not made in a day; it had no mushroom growth; but it advanced little by little, step by step, each year contributing its part. As the number of pupils increased and multiplied, the growth of the Institution was correspondingly more rapid; until today and for many years past, in patrons and pupils, it has had all that could be desired. Its handsome buildings with their excellent equipment; its beautiful grounds and parks where the greater part of the year, the eye, in whatsoever direction it roves, feasts on beauty, — are attractions that were wholly lacking in the 'sixties.

The old frame building long ago disappeared, and is remembered now only by the Ancients of the Community. By January, 1867, a brick wing, 32 x 60, was completed and ready for use. This addition to the east end of the frame building gave, on the first floor, a schoolroom and a pupils' recreation hall, and on the third floor a pupils' dormitory (no such luxury as private rooms for

pupils in those pioneer days). The second floor was reserved for the novitiate. As the pupils occupied the floors above and below the novitiate, it was a standing temptation to the curious to catch, in passing, a glimpse into the mysterious second floor. The new east wing was followed in quick succession by the main building 40 x 80, and a west wing 32 x 60, similar to the one on the east; so that early in 1870 the old frame building was entirely replaced by the present brick structure on the banks of the Raisin. As the later additions did not touch upon the life of Sister Brigid, they will not be mentioned here.

If we compare this achievement with the difficulty the Sisters had in purchasing their first new piano in '62 we shall be forced to conclude that St. Mary's was "up and doing," and as wide awake then as at any time in its later history; and that God's abundant blessings accompanied their every effort, and were showered unsparingly on each and every member of the little Community.

As we have given elsewhere a detailed account of the first new piano, we shall here tell the story briefly. When the department of music was organized in 1862, there were in the house two old pianos. One of these had been the property of Mother Mary Joseph when she entered the novitiate in '54; the other was a second-hand instrument

MOTHER MARY JOSEPH

picked up somewhere by the Reverend Father Van Genip and given to the Sisters. Up to this date (1862) the Community had never purchased a piano.

Sister Angela, who was a fine musician, and who belonged to a family of distinguished musicians, must have stood aghast at the prospect of opening a conservatory of music with two old pianos. She sweetly suggested in her gentle, persuasive way, the necessity of having one good instrument. Mother Mary Joseph, an excellent musician herself, felt this need as keenly as did Sister Angela; so they set to work at once to devise some means of procuring the price of a good piano. It was finally decided to open a subscription for the purpose. Mr. O'Connor, their earliest and staunchest Monroe friend, volunteered to take up the subscription. The price of the piano selected was three hundred twenty dollars, as formidable a sum, in the eyes of the little Community in '62, as a half million would be today. Right Reverend Bishop Lefevre, Reverend Father Joos, and Mr. O'Connor headed the list, each writing after his name the handsome sum of twenty-five dollars.

If we take notice that Mother Mary Joseph, on two occasions when writing to his Lordship, Bishop Lefevre, mentioned the new piano, we shall better realize how large an event in all eyes

was this new acquisition. In her invitation to Commencement (or the "Exhibition" as the closing exercises were termed in pioneer days) she said to the Bishop, "I think you will like our new piano. They tell me it is a very fine one. The subscriptions have been very handsome and have succeeded far beyond what I expected." In a previous letter she mentioned that the subscriptions were doing well.

Long before the list price of the piano was reached, however, subscriptions began to lag; the pupils now requested permission to give an entertainment, consisting of dramas and music, which netted the sum of forty-five dollars; and finally the ladies of St. Mary's parish generously offered to give a picnic dinner on the Fourth of July. The price of the piano was at last covered, with a sufficient margin to enable good Sister Angela to exchange one of the old pianos for a new one. So the Institution was the fortunate possessor of two new pianos and one old one. Needless to add that dear Sister Angela was supremely happy.

CHAPTER V

Her Personality — Gifts, Natural and Supernatural — Power over Souls

A DISTINGUISHED theologian once said in a conference given in our Chapel, that "beauty, though the least of our assets, still is an asset, and should be used for God's glory, to draw souls to His love."

Sister Brigid possessed the gift of beauty in an unusual degree. She was tall, slender, and exceedingly graceful. Her perfect poise and many graces of person, joined to a winning sweetness and gentleness of manner, would have made her an exceptionally beautiful woman; but when you add to all this the charm that intense holiness of life throws around and over nature's gifts, you have a beauty that is beyond the writer's power of description. We will let Bishop Maes speak: — When a young priest, he called at the Convent one morning in 1870. It chanced that Sister Brigid answered the doorbell. His business soon over, he returned to the rectory. His first question on meeting Father was, "Father Joos, who is that Sister Brigid? What is she? I felt, while talking to her, that she was reading the innermost secrets

of my soul with those wonderful eyes of hers." Father quietly smiled in reply, his usual way of answering questions regarding Sister Brigid.

A certain Mr. Howard, of western Michigan, brought his two nieces to St. Mary's Academy in '64. On his return, he chanced to meet the writer of this sketch, and among other things, said of his trip to Monroe, "Oh! there's a wonderful Sister there! She is a great saint! She looks like the Blessed Virgin!" Three years later when the writer entered St. Mary's as a student, she found it a current saying among the pupils, "She (Sister Brigid) looks like the Blessed Virgin."

Just one more of the many instances which might be cited in this connection: — A Detroit priest who was, at the time ('63) pastor of Our Lady of Help Church, said on one occasion to a brother priest, "Would you like to see an image of the Blessed Virgin? Go down to the Cathedral Convent; there is an Immaculate Heart Sister there that is in appearance my ideal of the Blessed Mother of God." At that time Sister Brigid was a novice and had been sent to the mission for a few months.

These little incidents, so widely separated in time and place, may serve to allay any suspicions on the part of her Sisters for whom this sketch is written, that the writer is disposed to exaggerate in speaking of the gifts, natural or supernatural,

of this perfect woman. God, no doubt, gave Sister this remarkable exterior beauty because He knew that she would use it as she used all other Divine gifts, — for His glory and the good of souls. It certainly proved a powerful auxiliary to her interior sanctity in winning souls for Heaven. She possessed great power over souls, especially over those confided to her care. She was all but worshipped by the pupils. Few, if any, could resist her; even those most steeped in worldliness gradually yielded to the silent influence of her holiness. To cite one or two instances of this wonderful power:

Among the students of St. Mary's in '67 was a young lady who, before entering the Academy, had become engaged to a non-Catholic. She asked, and obtained permission to correspond with this friend of hers — a concession on the part of the officials, never before granted to any pupil; it was entirely contrary to the rules of the academy. From the beginning of the school year to February, the saintly Father Joos exerted all his powers of persuasion in the confessional to induce this girl to break off the engagement, but his efforts were of no avail.

In the latter part of February, Sister Brigid took the matter in hand. One morning after the other pupils had gone to school, the young lady went to the recreation hall and was about to take

up her needlework when Sister Brigid, her eyes swollen from weeping, chanced to enter. The girl ran forward to express her sympathy and inquire who had grieved their idolized Directress, thinking, of course, that some pupil had been guilty of serious misconduct. Imagine, if you can, the girl's astonishment at Sister's reply:

"You are the cause of these tears. That Protestant correspondence of yours is breaking my heart."

The girl instantly promised that she would not ask to write again for the rest of the year. But this was not all that was wanted. That this was but an entering wedge was evident from Sister's next remark.

"It is breaking my heart to see a girl like you, throwing herself away in a Protestant marriage."

The girl's own tears were falling fast by this time, and after a short exhortation of perhaps ten minutes, she yielded and promised to follow Sister's advice. Without giving her time to relent, Sister conducted her at once to her own little cell on the second floor of the old frame building, placed writing materials before her, then softly closing the door, left her alone.

A feeling of awe came over the girl as she glanced about the little room with its whitewashed walls, and one window looking down on the veranda below. A small white bed stood in

one corner; on the opposite side was a plain deal table without paint, varnish, or cover, on which were writing materials and a few books; on the wall above the table hung a crucifix. Although the room was bare of all that was not absolutely necessary, it was spotlessly neat and clean.

After this brief survey of her surroundings, the girl took paper and pen, and did what she had promised to do, laid the unsealed letter on Sister's table and left the room.

To realize the wonderful influence of this holy religious over souls, we have but to consider that a very saintly priest, noted for his kind, fatherly heart, especially in the confessional; so much so, that it was the easiest thing possible to open one's heart to him and give him entire confidence; yet this priest with all his God-given power over souls failed to bend the will of this girl in the right direction. Perhaps the hour of grace had not yet come. However this may be, Sister Brigid, in one short quarter of an hour, won a victory where months of zealous effort on the part of one of God's holy priests failed. It was simply impossible to resist her and no one succeeded in doing it for long.

It is related in the life of the great St. Alphonsus, that, when he was about to give a mission where the people were unusually hardened in sin, he did not rely on exhortation alone, but joined

to it fervent prayer and severe macerations of the flesh, — even going so far as to bare his shoulders in the pulpit and discipline himself to blood to obtain the great grace of a change of heart for those hardened sinners; and seldom, if ever, did he or his sons fail to bring about the conversion of a people, however deeply steeped in sin.

In like manner did Sister Brigid, who was a true daughter of St. Alphonsus, undertake the difficult work of winning souls to God. To fervent prayer and tears, she added cruel sufferings inflicted on her delicate body, and then, and then only, did she attempt exhortation. Small wonder that her words met with an immediate surrender; the victory had been previously won in the silence of her holy cell.

Had the young lady who felt so mysteriously awed by a holiness she could almost feel and touch when she was introduced into that same cell; had she known what bodily sufferings had been undergone in that holy place; — and for her sake — to obtain for her the grace to write the letter she had just finished and placed on the table, she would have fled in terror from the room.

The following little incident, while not so important as the one just related, will serve to exemplify this wonderful power over souls. One

morning in early April the Superior called one of the young ladies and requested her to come with her to Sister Brigid. Sister had been ill for a day or two and was still unable to leave her room. As the girl entered, the face on the pillow seemed white and bloodless as a beautiful lily. She was greeted, however, with the usual sweet winning smile, so peculiar to Sister Brigid.

Sister was holding a letter, addressed to the girl; but before delivering it she asked her to promise that she would not do what the letter urged her to do. The girl replied, somewhat hesitatingly, that she could hardly promise without knowing what she was promising. Sister, nothing daunted by this refusal, held up her crucifix in her long, transparent fingers, saying: "Oh! promise me, dear ——, and I'll will you this (her crucifix) when I die." The girl was simply thrilled by the manner of this appeal and broke down at once; all reluctance to give the desired promise vanished and she replied:

"Sister, I do not believe you could ask me to do anything that would not be for my good. I promise."

The letter was handed to her and the little incident was closed. The girl mentioned above wears the "blue habit" today; and the crucifix which figured in the incident is on her chest — a frequent reminder of one to whom she owes more

than these pages can tell and, especially, the great grace of following her religious vocation.

Everyone whom Sister's saintly life touched, even remotely, felt her holy influence. Can you realize what a power for good this holy religious was during her brief career? She lived just eight years and five months from the day of her profession; but oh! what a long and full life when weighed by the scales of Eternity!

The following will serve to illustrate Sister's prudence, moderation, and wisdom in making corrections. It chanced one day at dinner, that the conversation at the senior end of the table turned upon religious vocations. After a time the discussion grew quite heated; it came to a climax when one of the group declared, quite emphatically, that she had as soon be buried alive.

Sister Brigid had been walking back and forth in the long dining hall at some distance from the Seniors. When that last extravagant remark was made, Sister paused in her walk, and directed her footsteps toward the senior end of the table. To her inquiry, "Young ladies, what is the subject of conversation?" Some of the group answered, rather shamefacedly, "Religious vocations, Sister."

There was a hint of iciness in Sister's tone, and a slightly added dignity of manner which told us that she had heard all.

ST. MARY'S ACADEMY TODAY

This is the beautiful building on the opposite side of the street

"Young ladies," Sister replied, "I do not know whether God will ever call any of you to the religious state, but if He should, it would be the greatest honor He could confer on you."

The chief speaker in the discussion replied with intense earnestness of soul, "O Sister, I believe it! I know it is a very great honor! but I hope that God will never confer it on me." The iciness of Sister's manner melted at once, giving place to a most amused expression of countenance; and with her face lighted up by a reassuring smile, she turned away saying, "Oh! you pagan! you pagan!" and here the incident closed, and was never again referred to by the Directress.

One less holy than Sister might have felt justified in giving a severe rebuke to the group, in order to teach them reverence for the religious state; but Sister Brigid, with her Godlike mind and heart, saw that what had been said was not prompted by lack of reverence, but rather by fear, and dread unwillingness to make such a sacrifice. Perhaps, too, the grace of vocation was already knocking at a heart, unwilling to open. Be that as it may, Sister Brigid's way of dealing, even when serious faults were committed, left no bitterness rankling in the heart of the one corrected; but on the contrary, drew souls to God. She taught respect and reverence for the religious state more effectively by example, by her holiness of life,

than the most forcible and convincing words could possibly do.

It will, perhaps, surprise the reader to hear that four out of that group of seven or eight girls who took part in that dinner conversation just related, were all, within the short space of about two years, wearing the " blue," the girl who " had rather be buried alive " being one of the number.

CHAPTER VI

Mary Clark — Elizabeth Benson — Charlotte Lewis Provin

A WORD about these four girls, whose lives were so profoundly influenced by dear Sister Brigid and who were so deeply indebted to her, will not be out of place in this biographical sketch.

Mary Clark, of Chelsea, Michigan, was the first of the group to enter that mysterious novitiate. When the Superior, Mother Gertrude, came before the end of the school year to take her from us, we were overwhelmed with grief and wept as bitterly as if we were mourners at her funeral.

She received the holy habit on May 29th, '68, in the Sisters' Chapel, taking the name of Mary Petronilla. She is still living (1926), but is off duty and has probably come home to die. She celebrated the Golden Jubilee of her holy Profession six years ago; if all her Sisters in religion could but follow her example and give the Community fifty-six years of loyal service, Mother General could easily supply all the wants of our schools.

Sister Petronilla is one of God's hidden saints. The virtue, most conspicuous in her, is humility. And since the masters of the spiritual life tell us that "where true humility exists all other virtues abound," it is unnecessary to continue the recital of her many virtues. A word or two of her humility and we shall have done. She has always seemed to strive to be unnoticed — to keep herself in the background. She could be elevated to the office of Superior, and returned to the ranks again; placed in school, or made housekeeper and cook on the mission; she seemed alike indifferent to all. Like the proverbial "walking stick" so often used by spiritual writers to illustrate "holy indifference," all places, positions, and work seemed equally acceptable to this humble soul; or if ever she manifested any preference, it was for the most lowly. Before this little sketch is sent to the press, the Day without End will probably have dawned for her, and she will have received the reward of her great humility and exact observance of her Holy Rule.

Elizabeth Benson waited until the end of the school year, before entering the novitiate; hence her many friends in the pupils' room were spared the mournful satisfaction of weeping at her obsequies.

She received the holy habit on the feast of St.

Bernard, August 20, taking the name of Mary Francesca. She will long be remembered for her genial disposition and many virtues. If one virtue shone out more conspicuously than others, it was charity for her neighbor. She was never heard to say an uncharitable or unkind word of anyone; and was noted for her devotedness to the needs of others, especially to her sick Sisters.

Her great fervor in the observance of the smallest points of rule was most remarkable; it was sometimes amusing, too, and occasionally rather annoying to her less placid neighbor. Sister would never speak during the hours of silence if she could possibly make known her needs by a sign. She was, therefore, the possessor of a somewhat extensive code of signs; which, while quite intelligible to herself, were, for the most part, wholly devoid of significance to her neighbor.

The writer recalls an occasion, when after many futile attempts to interpret this sign language, during which she herself was forced to speak three or more times, she finally said, "For goodness sake, dear Sister, what — do — you — want?" (every word emphatic). Signs were dropped at once, and her question, accompanied by the blandest of smiles, was put into plain English and answered immediately. Of course, this was carrying exact observance to extremes, yet one cannot but admire the spirit that prompted it.

Sister Francesca had a brilliant and studious mind, and was well fitted by her education for work in the schools. However, she was more frequently employed in housework. But whatever her work might be, and it was varied, it was done for God, and God alone. When in school, she saw the Child Jesus in the person of each little one. If cooking, she served our Blessed Lord in the person of each dear Sister. When Sister was first employed at housework, her knowledge of the culinary art was extremely limited; but not at all discouraged by this fact, she determined to learn. She provided herself with a huge cook book and studied it daily and conscientiously. We were often amused, and edified as well, when in passing through the kitchen, we found her poring over her big book. She was most solicitous for the health of the Sisters, and strove to give them frequent changes of diet. If sometimes indigestion resulted from the curious concoctions which came from her kitchen, the merriment occasioned by these strange dishes more than compensated for it. In the course of time, Sister became an excellent cook and quite independent of a cook book. She died of pneumonia, after a short illness, at Marshall, Michigan. May her soul rest in peace.

When Charlotte Lewis Provin entered St. Mary's in 1867, she was not a Catholic, and never

dreamed of becoming one. She had but one Catholic friend, and it was through this girl that Lottie chanced to come to Monroe. The little story is briefly this: —

One sunny afternoon in the middle of August, Lottie called at the school where her friend was teaching. They had not met in three or four years. This friend had just received a letter from Mother Gertrude, Superior of St. Mary's, in answer to an application to enter the Academy at the opening of the school year; her chief object being the study of music. Lottie, it appears, had been making arrangements to take piano lessons from a professor in Grand Rapids. But when she heard that this friend was going to St. Mary's for a similar purpose, Lottie at once expressed a desire to go with her if she had no objections. The friend was delighted, of course. It was then and there agreed that they would be ready in two weeks to make the trip to Monroe together. Her friend at once wrote to Mother Gertrude, making application for Lottie also.

The little events just recorded may seem to the careless observer very trifling, the result of mere chance. But to the eyes of Faith, it was all a part of the Divine plan by which this upright soul was to be brought under the influence of Sister Brigid, and through her, be led into the true Fold. That Lottie was determined not to succumb to any

such influence, the following conversation, which took place shortly after her entrance at St. Mary's, will clearly demonstrate. She had been speaking to her friend of Sister Brigid's saintly appearance and wonderful influence over others. Turning to her companion, while her large eyes became still larger, through a secret fear of the silent influences already at work, she said, "I begin to feel so strange already. I don't know what effect a whole year in this place will have on me; but if you see any signs of my becoming a Catholic, I want you to promise me that you will pack me up, put me on board the cars, and send me home." The required promise was given.

Lottie resisted grace for a long time. At night, when alone with her thoughts, this struggle became all the fiercer; and her friend, whose bed was close to hers, often heard her weeping and sobbing as if her very heart would break. Meantime, this friend was silently and fervently praying for her conversion.

As the year wore on, Lottie became more and more convinced of the truth and beauty of our holy religion; and the time came when resistance seemed no longer possible. In April she asked for Baptism, was instructed, and received into the Church by our dear Father, — he himself acting as godfather. It was kept a profound secret from the other students until all was over. Her friend

chaffed her not a little on the promise made early in the year, " to pack her up, etc.," and begged in mock seriousness to be released from the obligations incurred by that promise.

Like most converts to the faith, Lottie had much to suffer in the loss of friends, but she was more than compensated for these sufferings, by the glorious gift of Faith, and the joy and consolation she found in the practice of our holy religion. In the summer of '69, she returned to St. Mary's to enter the novitiate. She received the holy habit on December 8th, '69, taking the name of Mary Paula.

As she had been a teacher in the public schools, before entering the Convent, she was well fitted by education and experience for work in the schoolroom. But since she had a natural preference for housework, she was employed in it whenever she could possibly be spared from the schools.

Among the many virtues of our dear Sister, that one which overtopped all others, was her love for holy poverty. Nothing in her kitchen was ever wasted. Her clothes were neatly and carefully mended, and more particularly her holy habit and veil. While she did not carry the practice of holy poverty so far as did the humble St. Francis, who sewed ugly patches on a new garment to spoil its newness, she sewed patches plentifully on old ones, and so lengthened their term

of life to a good old age. When we remember that this Sister, in the world, manifested great fondness for fine apparel and had the means to indulge, it makes her practice of the virtue of poverty shine out all the more conspicuously.

We also remember when she had her servants to wait upon her and needed not to soil her hands with manual labor. Reverses came and she was obliged to dispense with some of these luxuries. When we see one like this, not only willing to serve the Community at housework as every good religious should be, but manifesting a decided preference for such work, we cannot but conclude that good Sister Paula never lost sight of what she came to the Convent for, but persevered to the end in her desire to become a perfect religious.

It may be mentioned here that Sister Paula was a widow when she entered St. Mary's as a student. She had been married young. After a happy married life of about five years, the Silent Reaper took from her her idolized husband and little son within a short interval of each other. To help divert her thoughts from the great sorrow which had darkened her life, she determined to take up the study of music as we have seen.

I cannot refrain from mentioning one more interposition of God's loving Providence in her regard. When her application to enter St. Mary's as a student was sent in, her friend, not knowing

that it would debar her entrance, did not mention that she was a widow. Her name, however, was plainly written Mrs. Charlotte Provin. The Sisters took note of the title, but concluded that it was a little mistake on the part of the writer; Lottie was accepted. After her arrival, when the Sisters learned that she was a widow, they made the best of their mistake, and requested her very kindly not to mention the matter to the pupils.

After a loyal service of nearly forty-two years, she died October 22, 1912, on the seventy-third anniversary of her birth. She made her monthly retreat on the 22nd which proved to be the last day of her life. How beautiful to spend the last day of one's life in prayer, meditation, and close union with God! And God, pleased with her fidelity, called her home at its close. A stroke of paralysis, during the night, set the faithful soul free. The story of this long and checkered life, finds its illustration in the poet's words: —

> "There is a Divinity that shapes our ends,
> Rough hew them as we will."

CHAPTER VII

Favorite Prayers

IT seems to have been a pious custom of our dear Sister's to write out prayers (her own composition, of course) which she deemed suited to her particular needs. These she fastened in her prayer-book. In the fifty-three years that have elapsed since her holy death, all but four of these prayers have disappeared from the book. Those that remain will be inserted here, before speaking of Sister as Mistress of Novices.

Generous Sister Gonzaga, to whose happy lot the prayer-book fell at our saintly Sister's death, may have been induced to part with one of these prayers, here and there, to Sisters who would prize them as precious memories of our sainted dead; but this is only a mere guess. The Sister, into whose possession the prayer-book passed, at the death of dear Sister Gonzaga (Baumgartner), treasures it for her sake rather than for that of the original owner whom she (Sister Alfreda) had never known.

To my Father and my God

"O, MY Eternal God and Father, I come before Thee to implore Thy help and guidance in my

poor charge; for I well know that *I am nothing, have nothing,* and *can do nothing* but sin of myself; and therefore I cast myself at Thy Sacred Feet and implore Thy constant light, grace, and strength, to fulfill with the perfection Thou requirest, each rule and duty. Direct me, O Lord, in every particular; teach me how to speak, act, and think, as will be most for Thy dear glory and pleasure, and the welfare of those intrusted to me. Thou knowest, my own dear Father, that I have no selfish satisfaction in the discharge of these duties, and I wish for none. Let Thy glory be increased by me, Thy will accomplished, and sweet pleasure made perfect, and I ask for nothing more. Oh! then, hear and aid me, now, and at each moment of my life; support my frail heart and courage; lead me to the perfection of Thy holy fear and love, and oh! grant that each moment of my life, each breath I draw, may be so many acts of *self-abasement,* and loving praise to Thee, my omnipotent and dearest Father. Amen."

The foregoing prayer is not dated, but it is quite evident that it was written after she became Mistress of Novices.

To my dearest Angel

"HAIL, happy Angel, my faithful and charitable guide! I beseech thee to assist me in raising my heart and my desires to God, for Whom I am

created. Since thou, dearest Angel, art ever in His presence, obtain for me the grace to truly know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him faithfully; to keep His commandments, my dear holy Rule, and never, never to offend Him by a mortal sin, or even a deliberate venial fault or imperfection. Instruct me, dearest Guide, correct me, and oh! assist me during life and defend me at my death. Amen."

To the Holy Ghost

"O DIVINE SPIRIT of love and holiness, come descend into my poor cold heart! warm and inflame it with Thy purest charity, and clothe my soul with Thy seven-fold Gifts. Amen."

To my dear eternal Father

O BEST loved Father, I think of Thee, and see in spirit Thee bending low.
Watching Thy creature's dying breath.
And I pine away for that happy hour,
When the portals of death shall be thrown open to me,
For I long to be pressed to Thy loving and once bleeding Heart;
To live and to love forever with Thee —
Then come, dearest Father, and visit Thy child,
Console her poor heart while in exile from Thee,

For Thou knowest this earth is but naught to
her now,
Her heart being all fixed and centered in Thee.
Still 'tis sweet, Heavenly Father, to know that a
day will arrive,
When freed from these fetters and bonds of frail
clay,
My soul will on wings of love quickly mount,
And soar to the realms of Thy Presence and light.
But 'twill cease not to flutter and pant with
desire,
'Till clasped in Thy arms of paternal delight.
Then, dearly loved Father, remember Thy child,
Oh! see but how fondly she looks up to Thee,
And soon let her kneel and adore Thy sweet face,
While clasping Thy feet in eternal embrace.
Amen.

September, 1867. (Written while reading Father Faber on "Death," in his "Spiritual Conferences.")

"An offering to my eternal God; to the greater honor of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph; and dear old Mary Magdalen, the sinner.

"O my God, behold me prostrate at the feet of Thy Divine Majesty, offering to Thee my entire being, soul, and body; every thought, every word, look, and action; every pulsation of my heart, every respiration, every motion of my soul and

body; uniting them all to the merits of the Incarnation, Birth, Life, Passion and Death of My Spouse, Jesus; also to His Sacred Humanity, Divinity, Childhood, Hidden Life, Ministry; Blessed Sacrament, and Session at His Father's Right Hand; to His Blessed Mother with all her graces, virtues and merits; to the praises and adorations of all the angels and saints, with their perfections and merits; and to all the good works and penances of the just on earth; to all the Masses that have been, are being, and will be said until the end of the world; I unite them also to all the sufferings borne on earth and in Purgatory; and to all the graces, lost or despised; to those conferred upon the lost souls; and to all that will be bestowed upon man until the consummation of the world. I unite them also to the praises of all created objects; to Thy past, present, and future mercies; and to the inconceivable love with which Thou lovest Thyself in the Three Divine Persons eternally. In union with, and through the above named merits and perfections which are infinite, I again offer thee, my God, my poor unworthy soul and body, with all I am and have for time and eternity, for the following intentions:

1. In praise and thanksgiving in behalf of the whole Church and created world; for all benefits conferred on man since the creation; and par-

ticularly for that love with which our sweet Savior permits himself to be sacrificed on our altars; and I offer that *adorable love* for the salvation and the sanctification of all mankind, especially for myself, my dear Father Superior and Confessor (E. Joos), my other Superiors, my Sisters; my dear parents, brothers, sisters, relatives, friends and enemies. I offer it also, dearest Lord, for the sincere repentance and happy death of all who die each moment of the day or night.

2. For the perseverance of the just and their sanctification; and be pleased, Heavenly Father, to regard with special love and graces our own little Community; our Rev. Father, our Bishop, our General Superior; and the local directors and superiors of the different houses. Look also in love and mercy on the poor suffering souls, and soon, dearest Father, admit them to their heavenly home. Oh! have pity upon them and pardon them the debt of justice which yet remains due for their sins and frailties.

3. I unite all I say, do, or think to my dear Lord's Sacred Humanity to compensate for my negligence, omissions, and those of all creatures, in our duty to God; and also in atonement for all the offenses, sins, and insults ever committed, are now being committed, and that will be committed hereafter. I likewise offer it for the sincere repentance and conversion of all sinners, particu-

larly of those who are near and dear to me, and those who in any way injure or feel ill towards me. I especially offer the Agony in the garden to obtain for myself and all others a true and abiding sorrow for our sins, with a salutary knowledge of ourselves.

Deign, O Merciful Father, to accept the oblation I have made Thee, and grant my petitions and intentions in consideration of the infinite merits to which I have united them, and through which I ask them for *Thy own dear glory*. Let me now, dearest Lord God, Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit, let me ever love Thee and Thee alone, with my whole heart, whole soul, and whole mind; and now in all humility and confidence, I bury myself through Mary's Immaculate Heart, in the depths of the Heart of Jesus, firmly purposing to remain there for time and Eternity. Amen, dearest Jesus, Amen."

"I wrote this offering August, 1865."

The following prayer was written before Sister became a religious. It is dated Chicago, 1861. This date coincides with that of her first entrance into the Novitiate, and her return, after a few happy weeks, to her home and family in Chicago. As the prayer seems to carry a note of sadness from the first line to the last, it was probably written after her return.

It is somewhat less beautiful than a prayer, for the same favor, an early death, written after she was a happy inmate of the Convent of the Immaculate Heart. It is this latter prayer from which the writer quotes when speaking of her wonderful love of God. It is much to be regretted that this prayer, with its words of burning love, and ardent longings to be with God, is among the missing ones.

To my blessed Lord

"O MY God, forgive me if I ask what is contrary to Thy cherished and ever adorable will! for Thou, dearest Lord, knowest how I long to go to Thee. I'm so tired and weary of myself and my innumerable infidelities. O, my Father, do not leave me so long here to withdraw myself farther from Thee; but, dear Lord and Father, let me go to Thee; let me die; let me suffer as much in a short life as I could were I to live to old age; and oh! take me from sinfulness and sin.

"My sweetest, dearest Mother, obtain that death will soon make its prey of this frail, sinful body, — soon destroy it. Let my soul either be purified before then, or let it enter that place of purgation, there to make satisfaction for the many times I have offended my God. Oh! how happy should I be to suffer, in preference to living and causing pain to Jesus Christ by my sins!"

CHAPTER VIII

Sister Mary Brigid appointed Mistress of Novices. — A few incidents of the Novitiate

SISTER BRIGID was transferred from the position of Directress of the Pupils to that of Mistress of Novices, September 17th, 1870. The change was made by order of the Right Reverend Bishop Caspar Henry Borgess, who went still further and put her under obedience to test the novices well.

If the writer may venture an opinion, this was the most distasteful work ever imposed on one who had always shown herself all kindness, charity, and sympathy towards others. But it was said of her that " she was never known to fail in obedience, even in what she only supposed to be the will of her superiors," and there will be no exception now.

If she was an ideal Mistress of Pupils, her personality exercising a resistless power for good over them, with as much truth may it be said of her that she was an ideal Mistress of Novices; her mere presence was a potent factor in their training. In her, they beheld a living copy of the Rule, — a perfect Sister Servant of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Her novices revered her as a saint; the belief that she could read one's thoughts was as prevalent in the Novitiate as it had formerly been in the pupils' room. This fact can hardly occasion surprise if we recall the experience of Bishop Maes the first time he met our saintly Sister. One novice was heard to say that during her student days, whenever she found herself seated for a little private chat with Sister, a feeling of awe crept over her; and she always felt close to the supernatural. If a worldly girl could be so impressed by her holiness, small wonder, then, that her novices should revere her as a saint, and a very great saint.

There were some, however, — a few — who thought her severe. The writer, who was also her novice, did not share this opinion. It seems to me that our mode of looking at anything depends largely, if not altogether, on our point of view. If, before entering the Novitiate, you had formed the opinion that it was much more severe than it really was, you would be greatly surprised to find it so much easier than you had anticipated. You would wonder at the home-like feeling that seemed everywhere to prevail. Your Mistress, far from severe, in your eyes, would appear rather like another mother; one who would take the place of the dear mother to whom you had said good-bye for God's dear sake.

Then the sweet charity of companions — always ready to lend assistance and sympathy. The writer recalls an instance in point, which made a deep impression on her, in the early days of her postulate.

She had had some rather painful work done at the dentist's, and was, consequently, sent to bed early by her kind Mistress. During the night someone, very quietly, — so quietly and gently as not fully to awaken the sleeper, slipped an extra pillow under her head. Next morning, to her great sorrow and confusion, she discovered that a novice (Sister M. Bertha Brennan) who slept in the same dormitory had, in order to make the dentist's victim more comfortable, deprived herself of her pillow and lain with her head on her hard straw tick for the rest of the night.

This beautiful act of self-denial and charity, to one she had known only for a few days, made a profound impression on the writer. Sister Bertha was at once elevated, in her estimation, to the exalted dignity of sainthood. And this is only one of the many similar instances of charity to one's neighbor that might be related of her and other members of the same Novitiate.

It may be said, in passing, that among the many beautiful qualities of heart and mind for which dear Sister Bertha was distinguished, none shone out more conspicuously than her

tender charity and loving sympathy towards her neighbor.

This is just a little glimpse into the Novitiate of 1870. But the writer is one of those who had expected the Novitiate to be vastly harder than it proved to be; and so on that morning when she found herself with two pillows, and a dear little novice with none, she felt as if the Novitiate was peopled with angels.

Now, if you will permit me to be personal, I will give you an example of Sister Brigid's severity in my own case, which would lose much, were I to try to tell it in the third person. Let me preface the little incident with a few words of explanation for the benefit of my younger readers who may not know that in those days of which I am writing, there was not, as at present, a complete new outfit hanging away, in safety, awaiting the great day of Profession. The novices were supposed to have the habit they had worn during the year of novitiate, in readiness for that occasion; there was no grand procession, accompanied by flower girls, the visiting clergy and the Bishop bringing up the rear; — happily for me that there was not (you will understand this last remark when I have finished my little story); and finally, the retreat before Reception and Profession lasted only three days, not eight, as at present.

As the time of retreat was so short it was, therefore, incumbent on those making it, to utilize every moment of it to the very best advantage. Now, good Sister Evangelista (Berry) and I most unwisely took some of this precious time — free (?) time, of course, — to sponge and press our scapulars. Our saintly Mistress was very much displeased at this, reproved us quite severely, and as a penance for our fault we were told to wear, on the day of our Profession, the old scapulars we had borrowed from the Wardrobe Keeper.

The scapular which fell to my lot came a little below my knees; was of flannel, and shrunken by repeated washings to about two-thirds of its original width. It was one mass of darning and worn so thin that little of the original warp and woof of the material remained; the scapular consisted mainly of darning. Both sides of it were profusely ornamented with ends of raveling used in darning. I do not exaggerate when I say it was beyond my powers of description. It was so unfit for use that I did not feel at all easy about wearing it on the day of my Profession. Sister Evangelista's scapular was, by comparison, respectable. It was of the proper length and not nearly so old nor so much darned; still, it was bad enough.

Well, the morning of the great day arrived and found us still arrayed in the old scapulars. It began to look serious when our Mistress let us

leave the refectory after breakfast without telling us to change. I slipped into the Chapel as soon as possible. I hope I made a generous offering of it to God; that is, of course, what I should have done; but this I do not remember. What I do recall very distinctly is, that after a few moments of prayer I became very calm and indifferent to my personal appearance; there was too much else to think of; it was too solemn an occasion to be marred by a thing that would be forgotten after a day.

The hour for the Profession drew near; his Lordship and the priests filed into the sanctuary, and the half dozen novices to make their profession did likewise, taking the places previously assigned. Everything went on as usual; we each went up separately, and, kneeling before his Lordship, pronounced our holy vows, and received our precious ring and rule.

It chanced that I was the one chosen to read the prayer which only one reads; this gave me an additional opportunity of displaying my religious garb; but by this time the old scapulars were pretty well forgotten. It might be well to say that the Chapel was too small to admit all the pupils, so a dozen or two of my young ladies had seats in the rear.

The ceremony of Profession, including the Bishop's sermon, was soon over; but my story is

not over; the best part is to come. After we left the Chapel, Sister Brigid took me aside to say that it had not been her intention, at all, that we should wear the old scapulars at our Profession. She meant to send us to change before going to the Chapel, and was on her way to call us out for that purpose, when she chanced to meet Mother Clotilda, and mentioned her forgetfulness to her. Mother Clotilda replied, "Never mind; leave it as it is."

Sister Brigid felt very sorry for us; but there was nothing to be done. She hurried me off to put on my scapular without delay. I was about to ascend the main stairway near the front door, when said door was quietly opened, and I found myself face to face with his Lordship, the Bishop. He was alone.

I held my ground without flinching while he deliberately viewed my attire from the bottom of my habit to my collar and down again, oh! so slowly and deliberately; then he looked full into my face, a broad genial smile lighting up his own. I smiled in return. There was no word spoken. I knelt and asked his blessing, after which we pursued our respective ways. I did not politely offer to accompany him to the door of the pupils' recreation hall; evidently he did not expect any such attention from me, under the circumstances.

Before turning aside to another topic, let me

mention something in connection with the foregoing which should not be passed over. No Sister ever mentioned to me, so much as one word about what had taken place at Profession any more than if it had never happened. Such refinement of feeling and tender charity, it seems to me, well deserves recording. One of my girls ventured to show her displeasure. Taking hold of my scapular next day, she said, with an angry pout on her lips,

"This isn't the scapular you wore yesterday, Sister."

"No? Why, what was the matter with the one I wore yesterday?"

She couldn't make any reply, of course. Laughing pleasantly, I said,

"Don't bother about that, Mary, it was all right." We talked about something else and the angry pout gradually disappeared.

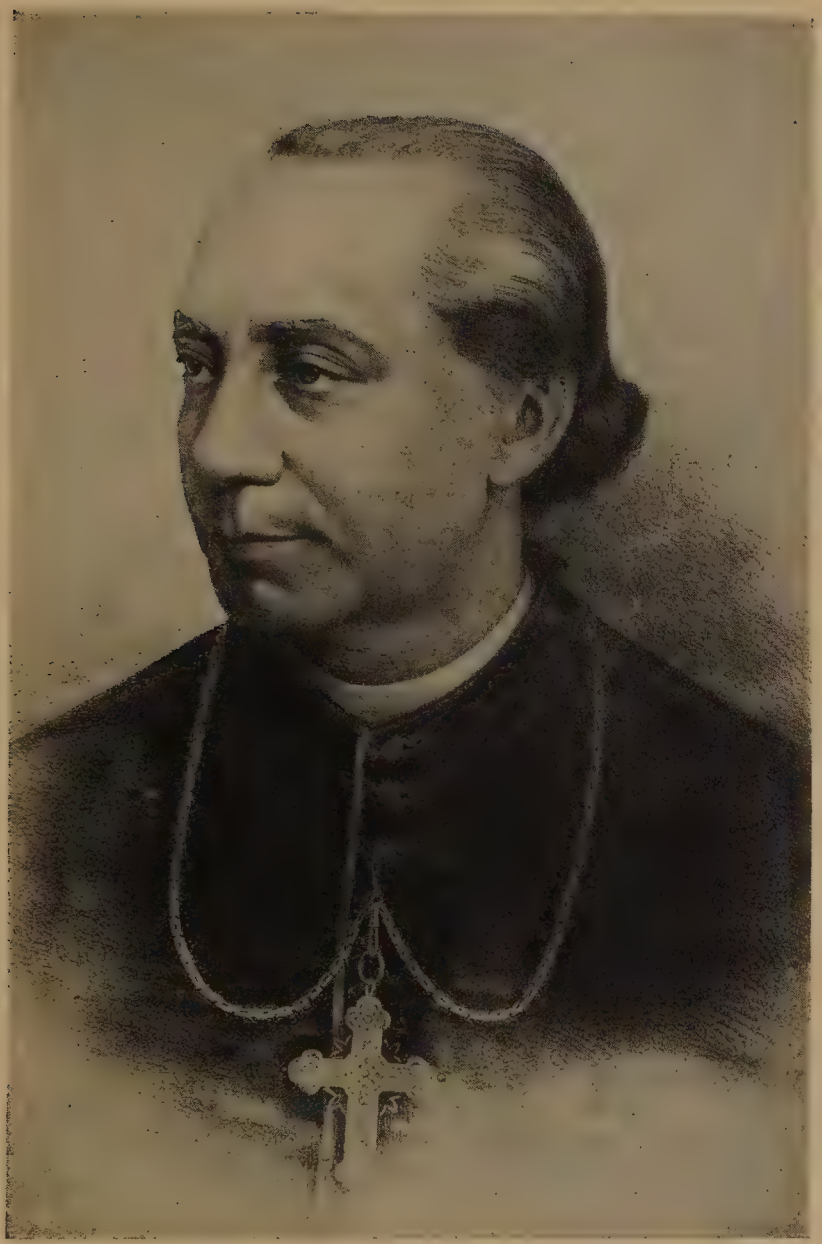
My little story is done; but a host of solemn thoughts come crowding upon my mind as I recall how few of those present at that Profession remain today: — The Right Reverend Bishop who officiated on the occasion, and the priests who assisted him, passed away long ago; Mother Clotilda, probably one of the best loved of the remarkable women whom God has called to preside over the Community and guide its destinies, has entered her eternity; her saintly Mistress of

Novices was called to the reward of her holy life more than fifty years ago; of the Sisters connected with the boarding school (directresses, music teachers, and other teachers) there is just one that could answer, " adsum " to the roll call today; and of the six novices who made their Profession, only one remains to tell this tale.

In the light of all this, how insignificant does the affair of the old scapulars appear! How little worth a moment's uneasiness, not to speak of pain! But, I think even my youngest Sisters will be able to draw their own moral.

P.S. I forgot to say that good Sister Evangelista escaped without attracting special notice. Relatives arrived while the ceremony was going on, and before meeting them, she had disposed of the old scapular.

When Sister Brigid was about entering upon her last illness, she had the great happiness of seeing a younger sister of hers, Catherine Smith, enter our Novitiate. Katie, as she was familiarly called, at first felt inclined to go to the Sisters of Mercy, in her home city, Chicago, — Monroe seemed so far away. But during a novena which Sister Brigid and her novices made to St. Joseph for Postulants, Katie suddenly changed her mind and decided in favor of Monroe. Good St. Joseph was, no doubt, responsible for the change.



The Right Reverend CASPAR HENRY BORGESS
Bishop of Detroit, 1870–1887

When three months later, Katie Smith exchanged her name for that of Sister Mary Frances, her saintly sister was too ill to witness the ceremony of Clothing. Sister Frances is still living (1926). She celebrated the Golden Jubilee of her Profession two years ago; she is this year enjoying a little vacation, — the rest to which fifty years of loyal service in the schools justly entitles her.

CHAPTER IX

Virtues: Holy Poverty — Obedience

A FEW words must be said of those virtues of our saintly Sister which have not yet received notice in this biographical sketch. We are so dazzled, so overpowered by her wonderful love of God, and that incomprehensible love of suffering which was so bound up with her love for her Heavenly Bridegroom, that we are apt to pass over the many other virtues we more commonly meet with, in the devout servants of God.

Our dear Sister seemed to be the happy possessor of all religious virtues in their perfection. It is next to impossible to associate anything like a deliberate fault (not to speak of sin) with her burning love for God. We are not unmindful of what spiritual writers tell us on this subject, that "all perfection is attended by some imperfection." If these words be true of our saintly Sister, the imperfections, if such there were, must have been infinitesimal, as they were invisible to ordinary sight.

The writer has been giving you an account, thus far, of what fell under her observation when

a student and later, as a novice. The little incidents of her childhood and home were gleaned mostly from confidential chats in student days. But if all were known that could be known of that remarkable life, what a book might be written!

Let me say a few brief words on her love for holy Poverty, and her perfect Obedience. In the life of Mother Mary Joseph, that great lover of holy Poverty, we read that, "a torn or soiled habit distressed her; but a clean and neatly patched habit she considered suitable to any Sister, whatever her office or rank in the Community."

When the writer was a student, she was forcibly impressed by Sister Brigid's observance of religious Poverty. While her habit and veil were always immaculate and free from dust, they were darned and patched. But those patches were inserted in the habit with so much perfection that they were the despair and the admiration of those less skilled in needlecraft; — for be it remembered that even back in the '60's, the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart were artists with the needle. Her shoes, old and much worn, appeared to be little protection to her feet. When the cold weather came on, we ventured to expostulate with her for going into wet places with such shoes. One of the girls even made so bold as to mention the matter

to Mother Gertrude; then the objectionable shoes were exchanged for another old pair, not so badly worn. We admired the well darned veil, the patched habit, and everything but the old shoes; but here the health of our beloved Mistress was endangered, and that was more than we could bear in silence.

We shall give one more example of Sister's practice of Poverty and we shall have done with this subject. The following incident occurred when Sister Brigid was Mistress of Novices.

A novice had removed her veil and headgear to bathe her face before Examen. Her Mistress chanced to pass through the dormitory, and took occasion to give this novice a lesson in holy Poverty. She was using altogether more water than the occasion required. The novice was told that although water costs nothing (it didn't at that time), the perfection of holy Poverty required that we should use only what was necessary. She said, moreover, that she never removed her veil from the time she put it on in the morning until retiring at night.

I believe in those days it was considered a slight imperfection to do so without real necessity. However, each one was allowed to decide for herself as to the need. No permission was required.

Her Obedience. — It is written in the Chronicles that " her love for holy Obedience was most striking. She was never known to fail, even in what she supposed to be the will of her Superiors." Who can add anything to such an encomium? In her brief religious career, she seemed to be at the point of death eight or nine times and received the last Sacraments. But each time when commanded by Superiors to ask God to restore her to health, she promptly recovered.

Even in her last illness, shortly before her holy death, Reverend Father told her that she ought to pray to get well. She turned an imploring look upon Father, and with her usual sweet gentleness, begged, with her whole soul in her petition, " O Father, for God's sake, let me die this time! " and Father, deeply touched by the earnestness of her pleading, withdrew his request and did not urge the matter further.

CHAPTER X

Love of Suffering

THERE is a subject, on which it is somewhat difficult to speak, yet it can hardly be passed over without some mention in this biography. Our saintly Sister sometimes fell into a trance. We shall use the word "trance" for want of a better. Only once did the writer have the exceptional privilege of seeing our dear Sister in this state.

She lay on her bed perfectly motionless. But oh! the heavenly beauty of her face! Beautiful at all times but now indescribably so; looking as if transfigured by Divine love. The eyes, wide open, their gaze fixed in one direction, were especially heavenly in their expression. Their vision seemed to pierce the veil that separates Time from Eternity. Who can say that the wonderful light on that lovely countenance was not a reflection from some heavenly vision not vouchsafed to ordinary mortals?

When the writer entered the room, Father Maes, who was at the time pastor of St. Mary's, was already there. He had been called by Mother Clotilda, as Father was absent. He was standing

just inside the door, as if he feared to go farther; his gaze fixed on the still figure before him, and great tears dropping silently down his face. He seemed profoundly impressed, and from that day it was his unshaken conviction that these states of trance in our dear Sister were wholly supernatural.

Dr. Arnold, a non-Catholic, the same doctor who attended Sister in a severe illness when she was a postulant, was called in on one such occasion. After looking at her for a few silent minutes, he seemed deeply moved, and turning away said, "It is altogether heavenly, and entirely beyond my skill."

Our dear Father, always noted for prudence, would never tell us what he thought; but his manner when speaking of Sister would seem to imply that he, too, considered this state of trance supernatural. The heavenly and indescribable beauty of her countenance at such times, coupled with her extraordinary holiness of life, would justify anyone, it seems to me, in looking upon these states of trance in our dear Sister, as supernatural.

In Holy Week of '68, something occurred which should find a place in this biography.— On Holy Thursday, Sister Brigid became very ill. On Good Friday, so great were her sufferings that

they thought her dying and Father anointed her. Her agony, however, increased in violence until about three o'clock P.M., when she began to grow easier. Word had been sent to the pupils earlier in the day, requesting them to pray as it was feared that Sister was dying. Imagine their astonishment and delight, when, on the following morning, they saw their idolized Mistress, fully dressed, standing at her window, and smiling down upon her dear girls on the veranda below. To them it seemed like a wonderful miracle. She was not able to leave her room on Holy Saturday; but Easter was made doubly happy by her presence among them.

However, that awful ordeal of suffering on Good Friday seemed to consecrate body and soul anew, and remove her still farther from earth and closer to that God for whom her soul was ever longing. It had the effect, also, of intensifying the awe and reverence ever mingled with the adoring affection with which her dear girls regarded her. (The writer heard the details of that Good Friday's agony from the Superior, who, of course, witnessed it.)

Sister's great love for God, impelled her, no doubt, to ask that she might share in the sufferings her Divine Spouse endured on Calvary for her and all mankind; and her prayer appears to have been answered as we have seen. It was said

that this favor had been granted to her in Holy Week twice previous to '68 but that her sufferings were much less intense. If it never occurred again after '68, it was, doubtless, because a wise and prudent Director forbade her to again ask it of God.

We read of St. Aloysius that he cherished during life, an ardent desire of loving God as much as He deserves to be loved; and being unable to love Him with that infinite love which He merits, the saint suffered on earth a continual martyrdom of love. These words seem to be as truly applicable to our dear Sister as to the saint of whom they were spoken.

In the Chronicle it is written that Sister " appeared to be consumed by the love of God." So intense was her love for Him that it seemed a veritable martyrdom to live; and so she longed for death, and frequently prayed to die that she might be with God. St. Alphonsus, that great doctor of the Church, tells us that to desire death in order to possess God and love Him better is true and perfect charity.

We once saw a prayer written by our saintly Sister in which she begged God to take her to Himself, saying with most childlike simplicity and confidence, " You know, dearest Jesus, that I do not ask this favor to escape suffering. Put

into a short life all the sufferings that could be endured in the longest life, and then let me die and go to You." And God appears to have answered that loving, generous prayer, for she had not completed her twenty-eighth year when He called her Home.

In sickness and suffering, no matter how severe, never was she known to murmur even for an instant. The Infirmarian, Sister Flora Collins, who took care of her in her last illness, seemed astonished when we inquired if Sister ever complained or lost patience. The answer came promptly, "Never." Sister's love of suffering was second only to her great love for God.

Another, and final word on this subject. After Sister's holy death, it frequently happened that Mother Clotilda importuned our dear Father to tell us something of Sister Brigid; as Mother Clotilda and many of the Sisters thought her extraordinary; but the prudent Director usually put them off with a smile only. On one occasion, however, when many Sisters were present, he gave this reply:

"I will tell you this one thing. She loved suffering more than all of you put together."

The writer of this biographical sketch, who was a young Sister at the time (1873), thought this the very highest praise, as the "pillars" of the Community were present, and many others,

not unacquainted with hair-cloth, chains, disciplines, and other implements of penance equally severe.

"She loved suffering more than all of you put together." After these words from our dear Father, who was the least given to exaggeration of anyone we ever knew, whose words always expressed the exact shade of meaning he desired them to convey, there seems nothing more left to be said on this subject.

CHAPTER XI

Last Illness and Holy Death

SISTER BRIGID became very ill about the middle of November, 1872. As she was confined to her bed from the beginning of her illness, she begged Superiors to relieve her from all responsibility. Her request, however, was not granted, as it was hoped that she would recover, and again be able to resume her charge of the novices. In the meantime, she was given a substitute; and so the weeks passed slowly by to the sufferer; —the Christmas holidays came and went, and the Old Year passed away; but our patient, loving sufferer lingered on. However, it soon became evident to all that our dear Sister had little chance of recovery except by a miracle. Reverend Father, about this time, intimated that she ought to pray to get well; she pleaded her cause so sweetly and touchingly that Father withdrew his request, and did not urge the matter further, as is elsewhere related.

Sister's entreaty to be relieved of all responsibility was finally granted. On January 9th, 1873, Sister Brigid ceased to be Mistress of Novices, and Sister Genevieve Kelley, who had been replacing her, was appointed to the office. Sister

Brigid had been Mistress of Novices two years and four months. In that time she had trained twenty-five members of the Community, only three of whom are now living (1926), — Sisters Flora, Melania, and the writer of this biographical sketch (all octogenarians).

January and February with their cold and scant sunshine had now given place to March, the month that would witness her triumph, — the month that would set her free. It was a question of only a few days until the Master's loving call would come. The joy of spirit with which she looked forward to the end was reflected on her beautiful countenance, — so much so, that some of the Sisters, deceived by this glad serenity, thought that our dear Sister suffered little. But the wise infirmarian, Sister Flora Collins, could undeceive them, — could tell them that her sufferings were excessive and were equalled only by the marvelous patience and love with which she bore them.

The poor body, always frail, which she had treated so harshly during life, was reduced to a mere skeleton by her long and severe illness. Her beautiful face was every day growing more and more ethereal; but the sweet smile remained unchanged. Divine love, like a consuming fire, was gradually removing the frail barrier of flesh, that stood between the soul and its Heavenward flight.

After having been confined to her bed about four months, at last, on March 15th, the Divine Call for which she had been waiting, praying, and longing, sounded sweetly in the depths of her holy soul, and set it free to fly to the bosom of its God. In the presence of her weeping Sisters, she closed those "wonderful" eyes to earth, to open them on the joys of Paradise. Well might her Sisters weep; not for her, but for themselves; for a bright light had gone out from the little Community; a shining example of all that was beautiful, lovely, and holy; all that a Sister Servant of the Immaculate Heart of Mary should be; in one word, a saint had gone from our midst to join the little band of those who once wore and loved the "blue,"—our little Community in Heaven.

Ora pro Nobis

MADAME CADILLAC RESIDENCE HALL

A Biographical Sketch of Our Three Marum Sisters

SISTER MARY CHANTAL
SISTER MARY ANGELA
SISTER MARY GODELIEVE

Our Three Marum Sisters

I

THE brief sketch of Sister Brigid's life calls for further mention of the zealous companions most closely associated with her, as General Mistress of the Boarding School. They were all, like herself, souls of a strong and lively faith, of deep and solid piety, and filled with a holy zeal for God's glory and the salvation of souls.

Among these, the three Marum sisters, Kate Mary, and Julia, deserve special notice. Kate and Mary were first to enter our Novitiate. They were soon followed, however, by their youngest sister, Julia; and together they received the holy habit July 18th, 1862. As these young ladies had a host of friends, and belonged to a family widely known and highly esteemed, the ceremony of Reception took place in St. Mary's Church, the Sister's chapel not being sufficiently spacious to accommodate the many friends who would wish to be present on so unique an occasion, — three sisters of the same family receiving the Habit of Religion together.

The Church was crowded; and the ceremony took place with all the solemnity, pomp, and splendor, with which our Holy Mother, the Church, can clothe her functions. His Lordship, the Bishop, was unavoidably absent; but his Vicar General, the Very Reverend P. Kindekins, officiated in his stead. There were a large number of priests present in the sanctuary. The Chancellor of the diocese, the Very Reverend Father Hennaert, preached a beautiful and forceful sermon, well calculated to inspire his large audience with respect and veneration for the religious state.

The new novices were to be known in religion as Sisters Mary Chantal, Mary Angela, and Mary Godelieve. They were made very happy by the many friends who had come from a distance to be present on the occasion, and offer their felicitations in person. Telegrams came pouring in on the eve and morning of the great day, bringing congratulations from absent friends. It was also a " red-letter " day, — a day of rejoicing and fervent thanksgiving for the little Community of only eighteen living members, when these three gifted young ladies were clothed in the blue habit.

The Sisters were about to open a boarding school and these new novices would be of invaluable assistance in its organization. This is but one of the many instances in which a kind Provi-

ENTRANCE TO THE CAMPUS OF MARYGROVE COLLEGE
Detroit

dence has interposed to aid our little Community in its needs. As we study its history we find it has always been thus; there never has been a time in which God's help was wanting; no difficulty that, sooner or later, with the same divine assistance, has not been surmounted; no work undertaken, that has not been brought to successful completion. The more we reflect upon it, the more clearly we see the hand of the dear good God in all. If we may judge of the future by the past, the important milestone in its career,* which the Community is now nearing, will be safely reached and successfully passed, all difficulties to the contrary notwithstanding. We may have an assured hope of the Divine assistance if we do not cease to deserve it.

II

To account for the smallness of the Community at this date, we have only to recall that three years earlier (1859) the " separation " took place, when one-half of our number went East to remain. This event left behind a Community of only twelve Sisters, a good deal handicapped. So great was the dearth of teachers at one time, that Mother Mary Joseph was obliged to rise from a sick-bed to replace in the classroom for an hour

* The writer here refers to the new Marygrove College now (June 1927) nearing completion.

or more, or until her small stock of strength was exhausted. She then returned to her bed, her Assistant, Sister Mary Xavier Egan, taking her place in school. This break-up in the Community had the effect also, of retarding its growth which, at best, had never been rapid.

These must have been dark days for the heroic little Sisterhood on the banks of the Raisin; but with the opening of the boarding school, things began to brighten. The music department brought in a substantial income; applications to enter the Novitiate became increasingly numerous, so that before 1870 had passed away, the first one hundred was reached.

III

When the Marum sisters entered the Novitiate, the family was residing in Flint, Michigan, but the Marums were originally from Ireland. Mr. Marum was married a second time. By the first marriage there were six children: five girls, Eliza, Frances (Mrs. Hamilton), Kate, Mary, and Julia, and one boy, Kyran. These were all born and educated in Dublin. The girls received their education from the Ladies of the Sacred Heart. They were all, with one exception, good musicians. There were two children by the second marriage, Edward and Hamil, the latter a famous musician.

This distinguished family belonged to what is known as the gentry — those of gentle birth. God had blessed them with wealth. Besides their town house, Mr. Marum owned a large estate in the country, on which he employed a great number of men. But the dreadful famine of '46 came, bringing in its wake death and desolation to all of that fair land. It was now that Mr. Marum proved himself a faithful steward of the great wealth God had bestowed upon him. We are told that he impoverished himself in giving to the starving poor. He gave and gave, with a liberal hand, until nothing more remained to be given. Then, no longer able to aid his countrymen in their distress, he abandoned his once beautiful Dublin home, and came to America to retrieve, if possible, his broken fortune. What title of nobility could bring greater prestige to the name of Marum than this magnificent record of charity?

Mr. Marum left Ireland and came to America in 1849, landing in New York City on the Fourth of July. Here he met a Flint gentleman who advised him to locate in Flint, Michigan. He did so; and with the exception of the three daughters who entered the Convent of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, the family lived and died in Flint. Hamil Marum, the youngest child, is the only member of the family now living. He resides in New York City.

IV

The boarding school was opened, for the first time, in September, '62. Previous to this date, the Sisters had conducted a day school only. The few boarders received were chiefly children who lived at too great a distance from the church to attend the catechism instructions preparatory to First Communion. These were taken as boarders for three months usually; but not till '62 did the Sisters open a boarding school in the proper sense of the term. And here the Marum sisters, now novices, proved themselves a Godsend to the Community.

Sister Godelieve was given charge of the school. As she had been educated by the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, it was quite natural that she should follow their methods, etc., as closely as possible; and so we had medallions and ribbons and other means of emulation peculiar to the schools of the Sacred Heart. These medallions and ribbons were retained in use, however, for many years after Sister Godelieve ceased to have charge of the Academy.

Sister Angela acted as General Mistress of Boarders until '64; and was also head of the department of music. She was a fine musician. In fact, music seems to have been a sort of heritage in this remarkably musical family. She was an

excellent teacher, and soon the number of music pupils began to increase rapidly, with a corresponding increase in the income of the Community. This was the real beginning of its material prosperity. Many ladies from the city enrolled themselves as music pupils. So prosperous was this department, that Sister Godelieve, also a good musician, was forced, sometimes, outside of school hours, to lend a helping hand.

The story of our first new piano is so full of interest, that it shall be told right here. When Sister Angela organized the music department, there were only two pianos. Age and use had greatly deteriorated their power of giving forth musical sounds. In her own quiet, persuasive way, good Sister Angela mentioned to Mother Mary Joseph the necessity of having, at least, one good piano. Mother Mary Joseph, herself a good musician, felt the need as keenly as did Sister Angela; but the problem was where to get the money. Oh! how slender must have been the income that could not carry so small an expenditure as the cost of a piano!

It was finally decided to take up a subscription for the purpose. Mr. O'Connor, a fine Catholic gentleman who had, from their log cabin days, frequently befriended the Sisters, offered to take up the subscriptions. The Right Reverend Bishop Lefevre, Reverend Father Joos, and Mr. O'Con-

nor headed the list, each giving twenty-five dollars. To quote the Chronicler,

"There was a most generous response to the appeal. Protestants, as well as Catholics, not only contributed liberally, but showed so much interest and good will to assist the Institution that it more than doubled the value of their offering." Nevertheless, the amount subscribed fell far short of the price of the piano selected, which was $320.

The pupils requested permission to help out by giving an entertainment, consisting of dramas and music. This not only netted the neat sum of forty-five dollars, but also greatly enhanced the reputation of the school. The audience were much pleased and surprised as well, at the perfection with which each pupil acted her part. As the price of the piano was not yet reached, the ladies of St. Mary's parish proposed to give a Fourth of July festival to cover what was lacking. The festival was very successful; it enabled the Sisters to pay off the balance of the debt on their new piano, and left a nice margin by which means one of the old pianos was exchanged for a new one, to the extreme joy and contentment of dear Sister Angela. The Conservatory was now supplied with two new pianos, and only one old one. The latter, however, held on to its place in the Institution for several years longer, much to the regret of music pupils. This instrument had a history of

its own. It had been the property of the saintly Mother Mary Joseph when she entered the Novitiate in '54. The death of this revered and much loved Superior in '64, two years after the transactions just recorded, gave to the old piano, more or less, the character of a precious relic, in the eyes of her devoted Sisters, who dearly cherished her holy memory. They were reluctant to part with it, although its days of usefulness were long past.

The pupils who were beginners in music were required to take turns in practising on this "relic of the past"; and not being swayed by the tender motives which induced the Sisters to retain this outworn piano, they found it a rather severe penance when their turn came. It eventually went the way of its companion instrument of '62 and gave place to a new piano.

Today (1926), sixty-four years after the organization of the boarding school with its department of music, there are at St. Mary's,* seventy-five pianos, a harp, violins, and other instruments too numerous to mention. Sister Angela Marum has had four successors as head of the Music Department: Sisters Henrietta, Theodosia, Angela, and Borromeo who holds that position at present. They were, and are, all teach-

* This includes the number of pianos at the "Hall of the Divine Child" and two for the use of the Novitiate.

ers of the finest type; enthusiastic, thoroughgoing, capable of getting from their pupils the best they were able to give. Each of these Sisters merits the highest praise for her hard work and self-sacrificing devotedness to the interests of the Conservatory.

With such teachers at the head, supplemented by an able corps of assistants, the Conservatory could not fail to be placed on an enviable footing. Its reputation has gone on increasing from year to year, until now it is nation-wide. When we compare these results attained after a lapse of sixty-four years, with the beginning of the Conservatory with its two old pianos, the contrast evokes a smile and a tear; and we conclude with the thought, that here again the bounteous Hand of our good God has visibly scattered innumerable blessings.

If dear Sister Angela could but see how the little seedling which she had cultivated with the tenderest care, for the first ten years of its existence, is now grown into a great tree, would not her generous soul rejoice?

Perhaps our dear dead do know how the little Community they loved and served so well, has prospered under the loving Hand of a kind Providence. It may well be that their powerful influence with God — for there is a long line of saints up there who once wore the "blue" — has ob-

tained for us many of the blessings which the good God has never ceased to shower upon the Community, from the first moment of its inception to the present hour.

V

These three Sisters have passed away, Sister Angela having been the first to be called to her reward. She died of pneumonia, January 10, 1872, after a brief illness of nine days. Her death was deeply regretted, as she had endeared herself to all by her kind, gentle, and motherly ways. It was said of her that she seemed like a true mother to every one with whom she had intercourse. As she filled the office of Assistant to the Superior for several years, she had ample opportunity of practising her favorite virtues of meekness, patience, and sisterly charity, which shone out so conspicuously in all her dealings. She held also the office of General Directress of the pupils from '62 to '64 and was head of the Department of Music during the entire time of her religious life. And God, ever mindful of our dear Community, did not take our dear Sister from us until He had provided a capable successor.

Sister M. Henrietta, one of our Eastern Sisters, had entered our Community in '71. She was a very fine musician and a teacher of long experience. Shortly after her coming to us, Sister An-

gela arranged to have her play some piano selections for the Community. There was one Sister present who, notwithstanding her great love for music, found greater pleasure in observing Sister Angela; for, from the first graceful stroke of the keys until the last sweet note died away, her face was beaming with delight. Whenever the player came to a particularly difficult passage and swept over it in a masterful manner, Sister Angela smiled her approval, her beaming face manifesting the intense satisfaction of her great heart. When Sister Henrietta rose from the piano, Sister Angela's first words to the Superior were, "Now, Mother, I can die; I have some one to take my place." These words take on the nature of a prophecy when we consider that early in the following year, January 10, 1872, her noble life was closed, and the Community had one more saint in Heaven.

VI

Sister Chantal, the most delicate of the three sisters, passed away in 1880, after a short illness. Notwithstanding a delicate constitution, and a continuous state of ill-health — she seldom, if ever, knew a well day — she was always at her post, answering the doorbell as the voice of God calling her to a duty. She had been appointed to the office of Portress, when a novice, and she con-

Sister M. HENRIETTA

tinued to serve the Community in the same until her holy death. As she was an artist with her needle, she had charge also of the pupils' sewing during her entire religious life.

She seemed to possess an unfailing supply of the proverbial Irish wit, and she found frequent occasion to use it when it was somewhat difficult to induce a pupil to do her mending in the most approved way; or to take a piece of sewing as necessary to her as it was distasteful. The witty remark, joined to Sister's power of persuasiveness, usually brought the recalcitrant pupil to a prompt and good-natured surrender. In extreme cases, before replying to the pupil, Sister sometimes turned her eyes skyward, we do not say Heavenward, as there was nothing in her droll expression to suggest prayer. The gesture said as plainly as words could do: "Whoever heard the like of that?" or, "Did anyone ever before see such a girl? etc." and then came the rejoinder, sparkling with wit and good humor, and the girl was invariably won.

In all her dealings with the students, Sister Chantal was averse to anything like a scolding humor, or any form of severity. She endeavored to win them to do willingly whatever she was obliged to require, and she seldom, if ever, failed. We cannot forbear giving one more instance of her great goodness of heart.

In the early days of the Academy ('70's and '80's), it was customary at Commencement to have a distribution of premiums, at the close of the Exercises. A first and a second prize were given in each class. Some weeks before the close of the school year, good Sister Chantal invariably came around to get from the Sister in charge, the names of such pupils as stood no possible chance for a prize in school. She would then undertake to provide in her sewing classes for as many of these as possible. One of her clever devices was to make two or three divisions of a class, then each division called for two prizes; for example, where there had been heretofore, one class in plain sewing, there were now three for the remaining weeks of the year. As Sister had a large number of classes in the various kinds of needlework, it was possible to multiply premiums rather indefinitely. She had, like Sister Angela, a kind motherly heart, and desired to see every child of the house happy. She was greatly beloved in return by the students of the Academy, as well as by her Sisters, who deeply regretted her death.

VII

Sister M. Godelieve outlived her Sisters many years. She continued in charge of the Academy, from her Novitiate to September 1871, a period of nine years, when she was sent as Superior to

open a new mission in Muskegon. This was the first time since their entrance into the Novitiate that these three Sisters were separated. When dear Sister Godelieve was saying a tearful good-bye to her two sisters, she little thought that there would be only one to welcome her home on her return. Sister Angela's death occurred on January 10, '72, and they never again met in this life. When Sister Godelieve returned for the summer vacation, we shrank from meeting her and being silent witnesses of the anguish of heart that was sure to be hers, as she went through the old familiar rooms, where for so many years, they had together worked and planned how best to advance the glory of God and the good of the Institution. Like the good religious that she ever was, she strove to conceal her sorrow from all but God; but the trembling lip and the silent tear betrayed the grief she would fain conceal.

After her first year in the missionary field, Sister Godelieve was again home, as General Mistress of Pupils; an office which she held for two years ('72–'74), from this time on, to her holy death, she served the Community on the missions, sometimes in school and again at music. She was an earnest, thoroughgoing teacher, devoted to the best interests of her pupils; hence her lessons in religion were especially well taught.

Sister Godelieve possessed a goodly share of the

dramatic element. When she was in charge of the Academy, her entertainments at the closing of school, and occasionally during the school year, were much enjoyed; and they received the high praise which they merited. Sister was very successful in dramatization; her most ambitious effort in this line being Cardinal Wiseman's "Fabiola." This she dramatized, and successfully brought out on the little improvised stage of those days, to the delight of an appreciative audience. In dramatic ability she had no peer among the Sisters until the coming of Sister M. Loyola Shanley.

Happily or otherwise, the day of the drama at Commencement seems to have passed, and with its passing, a great deal of hard work for both teachers and pupils; and at a time when, a good deal fagged out by the year's work, they were least fitted to undergo this additional strain.

Sister Godelieve never grew old; she remained youthful in manner, lively and pleasant; enjoying a bit of fun or a good laugh as much as the youngest of her Sisters. A perfect lady herself, she could not abide anything that savored of loudness or roughness in anyone wearing the religious habit. When Superior on the missions, she was prompt to repress any such tendency in the young; for which reason, some thought her too exacting as Superior; but those who knew her

best, found her no less kind of heart than Sisters Angela and Chantal.

Sister Godelieve was quick at repartee; and she found herself fairly well-matched in Sister Veronica Mulligan. Whenever these two Sisters engaged in a bit of word-fencing, they soon drew around themselves an interested and highly amused audience.

Her last mission was St. Stephen's, Port Huron, where she died of pneumonia, December 17, 1896. The Sisters who were at her bedside when she was dying spoke of her patience in suffering, her resignation to God's holy will, her beautiful spirit of prayer. They could not sufficiently express their admiration of her holy death.

She had given thirty-four years (counting her novitiate) of loyal service to the Community she loved so well, when God called her to the reward of her noble, saintly life. The remains were brought home for interment.

These three Sisters were religious first and always; and then, teachers and musicians. Too much could not be said in praise of their fervor of spirit, which seemed never to have suffered diminution from the days of their novitiate. Filled with a holy zeal for God's glory and the salvation of souls, they were, consequently, women of prayer. They were devoted and loyal to the best interests of their loved Community, hence were

models of exact observance of the Holy Rule. All who were privileged to know them, will remember them as shining examples of the perfect religious, — of the perfect Sister, Servant of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.